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CHARLES LEVER

His Life in His Letters

Yours very faithfully
Charles Reade

CHARLES LEVER

His Life in His Letters

BY

EDMUND DOWNEY

WITH PORTRAITS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

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To

The Memory of

JOHN BLACKWOOD,

a Member of a House whose transactions with CHARLES LEVER *are an object-lesson in the relations which may exist between Author and Publisher.*

PREFACE.

When Charles Lever died (in 1872), his daughters were anxious that his biography should be written by Major Frank Dwyer, but Dwyer was unwilling to undertake the task, and Dr W. J. Fitzpatrick volunteered his services.

In 1896 I asked Mrs Nevill, the novelist's eldest daughter, if she would be willing to furnish a new biography of her father. In replying to me, Mrs Nevill said that although she felt "most intensely the utter inefficiency of Mr Fitzpatrick's 'Life,'" she feared her health would not permit her to undertake a task so serious as the one I proposed, but she would willingly give me any help in her power either for a new biography or for a revised edition of the existing 'Life.'

Mrs Nevill died, somewhat suddenly, in 1897, and, so far as I could ascertain, she left no material for a new or for a revised biography of her father. Shortly after her death I obtained from Mr Crafton Smith—a son-in-law of Charles Lever—a collection of letters written by the novelist. Amongst this

collection was a series (addressed to Mr Alexander Spencer, a lifelong friend of the author of 'Harry Lorrequer,' residing in Dublin) covering, practically, the whole period of the novelist's literary career. Other letters written by Lever to his friends also came into my hands; and last year Mr William Blackwood was good enough to place at my disposal Lever's correspondence with the House of Blackwood during the years 1863-1872.

After due consideration, it seemed to me that a Life of Lever wrought out of his letters and other autobiographical material would present the man and the story-writer in a more intimate and pleasing light than the picture which is furnished by Dr Fitzpatrick. In the present work I have endeavoured to let Charles Lever speak for himself whenever it is possible to find authentic utterances. Incidentally many errors into which Dr Fitzpatrick had fallen are corrected, but I am not making any attempt to supersede his painstaking, voluminous, and interesting biography. Dr Fitzpatrick declares that his book "largely embraces the earlier period of Lever's life"; the present work deals mainly with his literary life, and contains, especially in the second volume, fresh and illuminating material which was not disclosed to Lever's previous biographer, and which affords an intimate view of the novelist as he saw himself and his work.

I am indebted to Mr Crafton Smith for the

series of letters addressed to Alexander Spencer, and for other letters and documents; to Mr T. W. Spencer for his permission to use certain letters in his possession addressed to Dr Burbidge; to Mr James Holt for letters written by Charles Lever's father; and to Mrs Blackwood Porter and Mr William Blackwood for the letters written to Mr John Blackwood. Also I have to thank Messrs T. and A. Constable for their permission to avail myself of the autobiographical prefaces which Lever wrote during the last year of his life.

EDMUND DOWNEY.

London, 1906.

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CHARLES LEVER:
HIS LIFE IN HIS LETTERS.

I.

EARLY DAYS.

1806–1828.

With that heroic heedlessness which distinguished him throughout his career, Charles Lever allowed 'Men of the Time' to state that he was born in 1809. The late W. J. Fitzpatrick, when he was engaged (thirty years ago) upon his biography of Lever, found it difficult to obtain accurate information concerning the birth-date of the Irish novelist. The records of his parish church — St Thomas's, Dublin — were searched unavailingly. Finally Dr Fitzpatrick decided to pin his faith to a mortgage-deed (preserved in the Registry Office, Dublin), in which it is set forth that certain "premises" — a dwelling-house, outhouses, yard, and garden—situated at North Strand[1] are leased

[1] Dr Fitzpatrick, in his 'Life of Lever,' declares that the name "North Strand" was changed to "Amiens Street" after the treaty

to James Lever for the term of his life and the lives of his sons, John, aged thirteen years, and Charles James, aged three years. This is dated 1809. Apart from this deed, however, there are in existence letters written by James Lever which fix the year 1806 as being the birth-date of his younger son. The day and the month are of comparatively little importance, but it is interesting to note that here also is there cloudiness. Dr Fitzpatrick was satisfied that the 31st of August was the day. For this he had the authority of Charles Lever himself: in one of his moments of depression he expressed a wish that August had only thirty days; he would then have been saved from the wear and tear of an anxious life. But James Lever speaks of September as being the month in which his famous son was born; and in 1864 the novelist, writing on the 2nd of September, says that his birthday—presumably the previous day—"passed over without any fresh disaster." Possibly there may have been a dispute in the family circle as to the exact hour,—the birth may have occurred "upon the midnight."

The year of Charles Lever's birth is unquestionably 1806; the place, No. 35 Amiens Street (formerly North Strand), Dublin.[1] The house in which

of 1802. A correspondent points out to me that, according to maps of Dublin published in 1800, the street was then called Amiens Street, and that it derived its name from Viscount Amiens, minor title of the Earl of Aldborough, who built Aldborough House in the neighbourhood.—E. D.

[1] 'The Irish Builder' published in 1891 a long letter from a correspondent who professed to have been a companion of Charles Lever. In

he was born was subsequently converted into a shop. At the suggestion of Dr Fitzpatrick, a tablet was inserted in the front wall of this building, bearing the name and the dates of the birth and death of Charles James Lever.[1] Recently, in making railway extensions in the neighbourhood, the house was demolished. A railway bridge spans Amiens Street at the place where No. 35 was situated.

In addition to the perplexity about the birth-date of the author of 'Harry Lorrequer,' and to the absence of any official record, it is not easy to arrive at satisfactory conclusions concerning his ancestry. A pedigree furnished by a relative of Charles Lever traces the family to one Livingus de Leaver, who flourished in the twelfth century, but some difficulties seem to arise when the eighteenth century is reached. In the Leaver (or Lever) line there are many men of distinction. In 1535 Adam de Leaver's only daughter married Ralph Ashton (or Assheton), second son of Sir Ralph Ashton of Middleton, Kent, endowing her husband with an agnomen as well as with an estate, the Ashtons

this letter it is asserted that the author of 'Harry Lorrequer' was born in Mulberry Lodge, Philipsburgh Lane ; but the communication, while chronicling some undoubted facts, is so full of obvious and absurd blunders that it cannot be considered seriously. It is mentioned here only to point to the peculiar mistiness which obscures many important facts in the early life of a man whose father was a popular and prosperous citizen of Dublin, and who was himself one of the best known of the men who flourished in the Irish capital about half a century ago.—E. D.

[1] It has been suggested that Lever was named after Charles James Fox, who died in September 1806, but it is more likely that his Christian names were those of his uncle and his father.—E. D.

thenceforward styling themselves Ashton-Levers. Another member of the Lever family—the name was altered to Lever in the reign of Henry VI.—was Robert, who was an Adventurer in Ireland during the Cromwellian era. Perhaps the most interesting personage in the line was Sir Assheton (or Ashton) Lever, who flourished in the eighteenth century. This worthy knight was born in 1729. He was the eldest son of Sir James Darcy Lever, and when he succeeded to his estate he achieved notoriety as a collector of "curios." He founded the Leverian Museum, an institution devoted chiefly to exhibits of shells, fossils, and birds, to which at a later period was added a collection of savage costumes and weapons. In 1774 Sir Ashton brought his famous collection to London, and housed it in a mansion in Leicester Square. He styled it the Holophusikon, and advertised that his museum was open to the public daily, the fee for admission being five shillings and threepence. In a short time Sir Ashton discovered that his exhibition was not a financial success, and that he himself had outrun the constable. He offered the contents of Holophusikon to the British Museum in 1783, valuing his collection at £53,000. The British Museum authorities declined the offer, and some five years later the Holophusikon was advertised for sale by lottery. Out of 36,000 tickets, price one guinea each, offered to the public, only 8000 were sold. Eventually the museum—or what remained of it—was bought by a Mr James Parkinson, who placed the curiosities in a building called the Rotunda, situated at the

south side of Blackfriars Bridge, and in 1806—the year of Charles Lever's birth—the collection was sold by public auction, the sale lasting for sixty-five days, and the lots numbering 7879.

Charles Lever claimed Sir Ashton[1] as a grand-uncle, and described him as an "old hermit who squandered a fortune in stuffed birds, founded a museum, and beggared his family."

The Levers seem to have fallen into narrow ways in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The novelist's father, James Lever, came to Ireland in 1787. He was then about twenty-seven years of age. In his youth he had been apprenticed to the joinery business, and he had drifted from his native Lancashire to London. Judging him by some letters of his which are now in the possession of Mr James Lever of Swinton,[2] he was a shrewd steady young man, possessed of an affectionate disposition and of a sub-acid humour. In Dublin he entered the business of a Mr Lowe, a Staffordshire man, who was engaged in building operations, and in the course of seven or eight years he was in business on his own account, styling himself "architect and builder." In 1795 he married Miss Julia Candler, a member of an Irish Protestant family who dwelt in the Co. Kilkenny, where they held land granted to their ancestors for services rendered during the Cromwellian wars. John, the eldest son of this

[1] Sir Ashton died in Manchester, eighteen years before the final disposal of his old curiosity shop.—E. D.

[2] These letters were written to his brother Charles, who resided at Clifton, near Manchester.—E. D.

marriage, was born in 1796. In the same year James Lever was occupied in a very considerable undertaking—the building of the Roman Catholic College at Maynooth. His Dublin address was now Marlborough Green. The "green" was a piece of waste ground: the existing railway terminus at Amiens Street is built upon its site. Lever's house faced the Green, and hard by was the famous "riding-school" of John Claudius Beresford. Here it was that Beresford used to exercise his yeomanry, and also, as Sir John Barrington tells us, where he used to whip persons suspected of disloyalty in order "to make them discover what in all probability they never knew."

James Lever was soon in a fair way to success. He made money and saved some of it; and, better still, prosperity did not spoil him. A few years before the birth of his son Charles he speaks of "building two churches, besides a vast quantity of barrack-work." In addition to the building of churches, colleges, and barracks, he was engaged in making alterations in the Custom-House and in the old Parliament House when it was handed over to the Bank of Ireland. These operations brought him into close relationship with a variety of interesting people. He had a clear head, a ready tongue, and a pleasant manner. The first of these gifts enriched him; the last conduced to popularity. It is told of him that his reputation as a clever and upright man of business and as a genial companion caused him to be selected as an arbitrator in commercial disputes. He held his court usually in a tavern in

Capel Street, and here after supper he heard the evidence and delivered the verdict. He demanded no fee for his services, and his method of apportioning costs was truly Leverian. The victor was mulcted for the price of the supper. The man who lost his cause could eat and drink himself into contentment at the cost of his successful adversary.

James Lever sent his second son to school when the youth was only four years of age. Charles's first preceptor was one Ford, who had a habit of flogging his pupils with almost as much ferocity as John Claudius Beresford flogged the children of the larger growth at his Marlborough Green Academy. Ford's school was broken up suddenly. The father of a child who had been subjected to a severe handling paid a surprise visit to the school, and, seizing the offending birch-rod, he flogged the pedagogue with such violence that Mr Ford "rushed into the street, yelling." After this *débâcle* young Lever was introduced to Florence M'Carthy, whose school was situated at 56 William Street. M'Carthy is said to have been "an accomplished man with a fine presence." He had been a student at Trinity College, but as he belonged to the proscribed faith he was debarred from taking a scholarship. It speaks volumes for James Lever's liberal-mindedness that he should have sent his son to a school presided over by a Roman Catholic. The future author of 'Harry Lorrequer' is described at this period as being a handsome fair-haired boy, noted for his tendency to indulge in practical joking.

Writing to his brother in Lancashire during

the year 1812, James Lever says: "Charles is at school, and is full of mischief as ever you were, and resembles you much in his tricks." A couple of years later Mr Lever reports Charles as "a very fine boy now — eight years old last September. I think to make him an architect." Possibly with a view to this, the father took his son from Florence M'Carthy's school and sent him to the academy of "a noted mathematician," William O'Callaghan, of 113 Abbey Street. Here Charles Lever met John Ottiwell, who was later to be one of his models for Frank Webber. Ottiwell, who was some years older than Lever, was the boyish beau-ideal of a hero: he rode, swam, fenced, composed songs and sang them, was a clever ventriloquist, and played the wildest of pranks.

When Lever was eleven years of age he paid a visit to his cousins the Inneses, who lived at Inistiogue in the Co. Kilkenny. He attended the classes of the tutor who was instructing his cousins, a Mr James Cotterall, "schoolmaster and land-surveyor." Cotterall was the son of a well-to-do farmer, and had received an excellent training in Catholic colleges in Ireland and on the Continent.

On his return to Dublin he was sent to "The Proprietary School," Great Denmark Street. The head of this establishment was the Rev. George Newenham Wright, a gentleman who was almost as free with the birch as Mr Ford had been. His suffering pupils eventually discovered a weak

point in his armour—namely, that he had broken down sadly in his examination in the Greek Testament when seeking for holy orders. When Wright was made aware that his pupils had heard of his deficiency in classical knowledge he grew tamer. But though he was a bad Greek scholar and a tyrant, the Rev. Mr Wright was by no means a bad teacher. He appears to have had a great liking for Lever, and the youth seems to have entertained a liking and a respect for his master. At Great Denmark Street the pupils were coached in other matters beside classics and mathematics. After the ordinary curriculum of the school had been gone through, young Lever took lessons in fencing and dancing, and won distinction in those arts. His father, writing at this period to Lancashire, says: "Charles is still at school. I don't know what to make of him; . . . he is a very smart fellow."

As his business grew, James Lever found himself advancing in social paths. He was fond of good company, and of this there was a plenitude in Dublin. The commercial depression which followed the union of the parliaments, though it had undermined many of the city's sources of wealth, tarnished its brilliancy, and destroyed its life as a political capital, had not succeeded in crushing the high spirits of the citizens. Many of the guests who enjoyed the hospitality of James Lever had suffered sadly from the political and other changes which had occurred in the early years of the nineteenth century, but they could

still enjoy a good dinner and a good story, and could appreciate a good host. Much of the conversation which took place at Lever's supper- or dinner-parties was of the brilliant era immediately preceding the Union. Tales of the Parliament House, of its orators, its wits, its eccentrics; reminiscences of the clubs, anecdotes of duelling and drinking and hard riding, went the round of the table; and as a mere child the future author of 'Charles O'Malley' listened now and again to hilarious gossip which he moulded later into hilarious fiction.

Mrs Lever was an excellent housewife,—very tidy, very orderly, and deeply devoted to her husband and to her two children. She is described as a pleasant coquettish little woman, whose sole desire was to make every one in her circle happy. Charles Lever's early days were spent in a bright and cheerful home — an inestimable blessing to any youth, but especially to an imaginative boy. He did not stand much in awe of his good-humoured parents: he was by no means shy of playing upon them mild practical jokes. One of these—it was frequently repeated, yet it never seemed to miss fire—was to read aloud the details of some wonderful event supposed to be recorded in a newspaper, leaving his father and mother to discover at their leisure that the wonderful event was a coinage of Charlie's brain.

During his schooldays he had a theatre of his own at the back of the house: he produced stock pieces — "Bombastes Furioso" was one of his

favourites—and improvised dramas. He painted the necessary scenery, designed the costumes, was the leading actor, and occasionally his own orchestra. As much of his pocket-money as he could spare, after satisfying the demands upon it for theatrical pursuits, was expended on books—chiefly novels. In addition to this love of literature and the drama, young Lever evinced at a very early age a fondness for military heroes and military affairs. Occasionally military men were to be encountered under his father's roof, and at times the youth was to be found haunting some convenient barrack. James Lever had expressed a desire that his second son should become an architect, but he was not infrequently fearful that the lad might one fine morning take it into his wild head to seek the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth. Charles, however, decided, in his sixteenth year, that he would not become an architect or a soldier. He was desirous of qualifying for the medical or the legal profession; and his father, although he was anxious that his son should take up his own business, made no protest against the selection of a more learned avocation. On October 14, 1822, Charles Lever entered Trinity College, Dublin,[1] as a pensioner, taking up his quarters at No. 2 Botany Bay Square. His college chum was Robert Torrens Boyle. They played almost as many pranks in

[1] Lever's writing-table and study-chair are kept in the librarian's room at Trinity College. They were presented to the University in 1874 by Lever's eldest daughter, Mrs Nevill.—E. D.

Trinity as Charles O'Malley and Webber[1] played there; but though he was the leading spirit in all the mischief that was afoot, young Lever was never guilty of any discreditable conduct or of any personal excesses. One might be led to think, in reading his early novels, that their author had been a wild liver; but it is stated on trustworthy authority that at no period was he otherwise than moderate in the use of stimulants. He is described as being, during his college era, tall, athletic, and mercurial, with wonderfully expressive eyes, sometimes flashing fire, sometimes twinkling with mirth. Notwithstanding his love of fun and frolic he found time for reading—light reading as well as heavy reading. In later years he speaks of the days when he was a freshman: "We talked of 'Ivanhoe' or 'Kenilworth,' and I can remember too, when the glorious spirit of these novels had so possessed us, that we were elevated and warmed to an unconscious imitation of the noble thoughts and deeds of which we had been reading." This boyish enthusiasm, he goes on to say, was better than the spirit of mockery engendered by the insensate craving for stimulus which was produced by the reading of sensation stories. "The glorious heroism of Scott's novels was a fine stream to turn into the turbid waters of our worldliness. It was of incalculable benefit to give men even a passing glance of noble de-

[1] Frank Webber was an amalgam of Boyle and of John Ottiwell (who had been the Trinity chum of Charles Lever's brother, John).—E. D.

votion, of high-hearted courage, and unsullied purity." His admiration of Sir Walter Scott's romances, and his contempt for "sensational novels," remained with him to the end.

Notwithstanding his tendency to play "O'Malley" pranks, young Lever was held in as high favour by the dons as by his fellow-students. Though he was not a hard worker yet he was by no means an idler: when he was not absorbed in his studies he was astonishingly busy with his amusements. His leisure hours were amply occupied—"training horses for a race in the Phœnix, arranging a rowing match, getting up a mock duel between two white-feathered friends, or organising the Association for Discountenancing Watchmen."

Even at the early period of his career—though so far he evinced no powers of story-weaving and was not burdened with a desire "to commence author"—he had a great love for ballads and ballad-writing. On one occasion he attired himself as a mendicant ballad-monger, singing in the streets snatches of political verses composed by himself. He was accompanied by some college friends, who luckily were at hand when certain unpopular sentiments in his doggerels provoked a street row. It is stated that he returned from this expedition with thirty shillings in coppers, collected from admirers of his minstrelsy.

Charles's brother, John, had been ordained about the time that Charles entered Trinity, and had been sent into Connaught as a curate. Charles paid his first visit to the West of Ireland in 1823.

He was then entering into his eighteenth year, and, according to his brother, he was ready of speech and possessed the laughing though deferential manner which he carried with him throughout his life. John resided at Portumna, and he could offer his brother facilities for fishing and shooting; moreover, he was able to give him a glimpse of the life of the Connaught squire. Amongst the houses to which John had the *entrée* was Portumna Castle, then the residence of the widowed Countess of Clanricarde, a daughter of Sir Thomas Burke, Bart., of Marble Hall. The Countess was famed for her hospitality — famed even amongst a people noted for their easy-going habits, for their sprightliness, and for their unfailing courtesy to strangers. The brothers Lever were favoured guests at Portumna Castle, and here Charles encountered people who told him good stories of hunting, of steeple-chasing, of duelling, of love-making, of dare-devilry, which at the time impressed him vividly: subsequently some of this homespun was woven into his novels of the West.

After his first few visits to the County Galway, Lever began to develop a taste for improvising romances,—not committing them to paper, but relating them to his college chums. "He would tell stories by the hour," declares one of his fellow-students, "and would so identify himself with the events as to impart to them all the vitality and interest of personal adventure."

The elder Levers had now moved from the city of Dublin. On the road to Malahide, about four

miles from the city, James Lever built himself a handsome dwelling-house which he called Moatfield. He expected that his second son would graduate in 1826, but Charles did not obtain his B.A. degree until the autumn of 1827. After he had "walked the hospitals" for some time, Charles made up his mind to visit Germany and to continue there his university career. He set out from Dublin in 1828, and under the title of 'The Log-Book of a Rambler' he recorded his first impressions of Continental life.

II.

THE LOG-BOOK OF A RAMBLER.[1]

1828.

In the early part of last year I was awaiting in Rotterdam the arrival of a friend from England;[2] and as some untoward circumstances had occurred to detain him beyond the appointed time, I had abundant opportunity to domesticate in the family of mine host of the Boar's Head. Do not suppose from the fact of my being thus *enfoncé* that I shall gratify either your gossiping disposition or your love of personalities by any little detail of family failings from which the houses of the great are not always free. No: though the literary world does not want for instances of this practice, I shall abstain, and confine myself merely to such

[1] This account of his wanderings in Germany was written by Lever in 1829-30. The original MS. of 'The Log-Book' was recently presented to the Royal Irish Academy by Mr C. Litton Falkner. The principal portion of the Log was printed at intervals in 'The Dublin Literary Gazette' during the year 1830.—E. D.

[2] John Maxwell, a companion of Lever, to whom many references are made in the course of his correspondence with Alexander Spencer.—E. D.

a delineation of the outward man as may serve to make you acquainted with him.

Mine host was the most famous gastronome of the Low Countries, and at the two *table d'hôtes* at which he daily presided, never was known to neglect the order and procession of the various courses of soup, fish, game, and sauerkraut—of all and each of which he largely partook.

Would that George Cruikshank could have seen him with that breastplate of a napkin — which, *more majorum*, was suspended from his neck— whilst his hand grasped a knife whose proportions would cast into insignificance the inoffensive weapon of our Horse Guards! His head, too, was a perfect study. *Giove!* what depressions where there should have been bumps. And then his eye, alternately opening and closing, seemed as if it were to relieve guard upon the drowsiness of his features.

He spoke but seldom, and, despite my various efforts to draw him into culinary discussion (having had some intention of publishing these "Conversations"), he was ever on his guard, and only once, when—— But I grow personal, and shall return to myself. So effectually did the society of this sage, the air of the place, and above all the statue of Erasmus which looked so peacefully on me from the market-place opposite the inn, conspire to tranquillise my mind, that in the course of a few weeks I had become as thoroughly a Dutchman as if I had never meditated an excursion beyond The Hague in a *trek-schuit*.

Dinner over, I was to be seen lolling under the trees on the Boomjes,[1] with my tobacco-bag at my buttonhole and my meerschaum in my hand, calmly contemplating the boats as they passed and repassed along the canal. In this country such a scene would have been all bustle, confusion, and excitement: there it was quite the reverse,—scarcely a ripple on the surface of the water indicated the track of the vessel as she slowly held her course. How often have I watched them nearing a bridge, which, as the boat approached, slowly rose and permitted her to pass, whilst from the window of the low toll-house a long pole is projected with a leathern purse at its extremity, into which the ancient mariner at the helm bestows his tribute money and holds on his way, still smoking! But now comes the tug-of-war; it is, indeed, the only moment of bustle I have ever witnessed in Holland. How is the bridge to get down? Dutch mechanics have provided for its elevation, but not for its descent; and it is in this emergency that the national character shines forth,—and the same spirit of mutual assistance and co-operation which enabled them to steal a kingdom from the ocean becomes non-triumphant. Man by man they are seen toiling up the steep ascent, and, creaking under many a fat burgomaster, the bridge slowly descends and rests again upon its foundation. Doubtless, like the ancients, they chose to perpetuate customs which teach that laudable dependence of man upon his fellows—the strongest link which

[1] The Regent Street of Rotterdam.

binds us in society—rather than mar this mutual good feeling by mechanical invention.

Day after day passed in this manner, and probably you will say how stupid, how tiresome, all this must have been: so it would, doubtless, to one less gifted with the organ of assimilation or who has not, like me, endured the tedium of a soiree at Lady ——'s.

At length my friend arrived, and after a few days spent in excursions to The Hague and the Palace in the wood, we set off in order to reach Cologne in time for the musical festival.

We left Rotterdam at night on the steamboat, and the following morning found us slowly stemming the current of the rapid Rhine, whose broad surface and unwooded banks gave an air of bleakness and desolation which more than once drove me from the deck to the warm stove of the cabin, crowded as the cabin was with smoking and singing Hollanders on the way to the Festival. Once I ascended the rigging to get a more extended view of the surrounding country: I might as well have remained below. A vast flat track of land, intersected by canals and studded with an occasional solitary windmill, was all the eye could compass, and then it was that I felt the full force of Goldsmith's *mot* that "Holland looks like a country swimming for its life." Nothing breaks the dull monotony of a voyage on the lower Rhine except the sight of some vast raft of timber, peopled by its myriads of inhabitants, dropping down the current.

We passed several towns: but variety of Dutch city, Dutch lady, and Dutch ship, is only a slight deviation from an established scale of proportions.

Of my fellow-travellers I can tell you nothing. I had no means of cultivating their acquaintance; they spoke French (and doubtless they had a right to do so) after a manner of their own, but were as unintelligible to me as Kant's metaphysics or Mr. Montague's directions for dancing the new galopades.

As an illustration of the peculiarity of pronunciation, they tell of a Fleming commencing, I believe, one of Beaumarchais' plays with the line—

"Hélas! je ne sais pas quel cours je dois prendre";

Upon which a witty Frenchman replied—

"Monsieur, prenez la poste et retournez en Flandre."

Never was Parisian at Potsdam more thoroughly *ennuyé* than I was during this voyage of two days. It was near night when I was roused from slumber by the boat's arrival in Cologne. I had been dreaming of all sorts of things and people,—visions of mulled wine and Mozart, beefsteaks and Beethoven, flitted through my mind in all the mazes of mad confusion; and with the valorous resolution of realising at least one part of my musings in the shape of a hot supper and a flask of Nierensteiner, I went up on deck, when my friend came to meet me with the disastrous intelligence that there was not an unoccupied room or bed in

the town. The good supper, the Nierensteiner, and the soft bed on which I had rolled by anticipation, faded like the baseless fabric of a vision.

However, we set out upon a voyage of discovery, accompanied by a little army of baggage porters and lackeys, one word of whose language we did not understand, but who did not on that account cease to hurl at our devoted heads every barbarous guttural of their macadamising tongue.

In this manner we made the tour of the entire town, and I was concluding a most affecting appeal to the sympathies of the vinegar-faced landlady of the Hôtel d'Hollande, which I already perceived would prove unsuccessful, when a German merchant with whom we had travelled from Rotterdam made his appearance, and by his kind interference we were admitted. Having realised our intentions with respect to supper, fatigued and worn out by our indefatigable exertions, we wrapped our travelling cloaks around us and slept soundly till morning.

As we had arrived one day before the Festival, we had full time to see the town. It was a mass of dark, narrow, ill-paved streets, with high gloomy-looking houses, each story projecting beyond the one beneath, and thus scarcely admitting the light of the blue heavens.

The Cathedral, however, is one of the most beautiful specimens of the florid Gothic remaining in Europe, and would, had it been completed, have eclipsed the more celebrated Cathedral of Strasbourg: the great entrance presents the richest

instance of the laboured tracery of this school of architecture I have ever witnessed. The structure was originally designed to be built in the shape of a cross, but two limbs were all that were finished. The exterior is divided into a number of small chapelries, each of which boasts its patron saint, whose bones are exhibited in a glass-case to the admiration of the devotee.

Amongst the many relics preserved here, I well recollect with what pride the venerable sexton pointed out to me the skulls of Die Heilige drei Könige—by this meant the Magi, whom they call the Three Holy Kings, one of whom being an African, his skull had been most appropriately painted black.

In the middle of the great aisle stands a large misshapen block of marble, about two feet in height, and from three to four feet in length: this could never have formed any portion of the building, and stands, like our Irish Round Towers, a stumbling-block to the antiquarian.

The legend—I wish we could account for our Round Towers so reasonably—says that the devil had long endeavoured to terrify the workmen from the building, and had practised all the devices approved of on such occasions to prevent its completion; but being foiled in all, in a fit of spleen he hurled this rock through the roof of the Cathedral, and neither man nor the art of man can avail to remove it from its deep-rooted foundation. Be this as it may, there stands the rock, and Œhlenschläger, the Danish poet, has alluded to it

in his spirited tale of "Peter Bolt" (translated into 'Blackwood's Magazine' without acknowledgment).

We rose early on the following morning, and profiting by the advice of that wisest of travellers, Captain Dalgetty, victualled for an indefinite period. And here let me do justice to the character of that worthy woman whom I in my profligacy called vinegar-faced: as an artiste she was altogether unexceptionable.

Eaten bread is soon forgotten, saith the proverb. And if the passage is to be taken literally, so should it, say I. At the same time, I defy any man who has a heart to feel and a palate to taste ever to lose the recollection of a well-dressed maintenon cutlet or a chicken salad. No; it will recur to him *post totidem annos*, and bring once more "the soft tremulous dew" upon his lips.

At last we set out for the Festival, and although anticipating a crowd, yet we never expected to have found, as we did, every avenue blocked up by the people. Notwithstanding the immense number and the natural anxiety of all to press on and secure good places, nothing could exceed the good order and decorum: it was a perfect contradiction to Dean Swift's adage that a crowd is a mob even if it is composed of bishops.

Into this dense mass we get gradually wedged, little regretting the delay which afforded so good an opportunity of looking about where there was so much to interest and amuse us.

The Cologne belles, with their tight-laced bodices of velvet, their black eyes, and still blacker hair,

rarely covered by anything but a silk handkerchief drawn tightly over it, formed a strong contrast to the fair-complexioned, blue-eyed daughters of Holland, whose demure and almost *minauderie* demeanour was curiously contrasted with the air of coquetry which the others have borrowed from their French neighbours; while the fat happy-looking burgher from Antwerp stood in formidable relief to the tall gaunt Prussian, who was vainly endeavouring to mould his cast-iron features into an expression of softness to salute some fair acquaintance.

My attention to the various coteries around was drawn off by a slight motion in the crowd, indicating that those nearest the door had gained admittance, and the swell of music borne upon the wind, mingled with the din of the multitude, forcibly reminded me of the far-off roar of Niagara when first I heard it booming in the distance.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream, and, deeply engrossed by the various associations thus unexpectedly conjured up, I found myself, without being aware of it, at the entrance of the Cathedral.

Never shall I forget the effect of that moment. The vast building lay before me crowded with human beings to the roof, while the loud bray of the organ mingling its artillery of sound with the deafening peal of several hundred instruments was tremendous.

When I had sufficiently recovered from my first sensations of ecstasy, I looked towards the choir, hoping to see Ries or Spohr, both of whom were

present, but I could not recognise them in the distance.

I had a very fine description of the Festival and the music—which consisted of selections from Handel and Beethoven—ready written, but I really feel that any attempt to convey the idea of this splendid spectacle, or my feelings on witnessing it, is altogether vain. In fact, the sensation of excitement with which I looked and listened was too great to permit of any permanent impression, capable of description, remaining in my mind. And I felt on coming out as if years had rolled over my head since the morning; for we measure time past not so much by the pleasurable or painful feelings which we have experienced during its lapse, as by the mere number and variety of sensations that have imprinted themselves on the sensorium. . . .

There was little inducement to remain in Cologne when the Festival was over, so that having secured places in the steamboat for Bonn, we took our last look at the Cathedral by moonlight and returned to our beds. Next morning I was awoke by the most diabolical war-whoop that can be conceived, and on looking out from my window I descried the cause of my alarm to be a cow's horn, blown by a person who might, from the length and breadth of his blast, have been one of the performers at Jericho. I found afterwards that the horn-blower was an emissary from the steamboat come to inform us that she was ready to depart, and would be under weigh in a few moments. After dressing rapidly, we soon found ourselves

seated upon the deck: the air was calm—not a breeze ruffled the broad surface of the Rhine: it lay like a mirror before us, reflecting the tapered minarets and richly ornamented dome of the Cathedral, which glistened under the morning dew, like a vast globe of gold.

From the moment we left Cologne the scenery began to improve, and near Bonn it became really beautiful. The Rhine, from the bold and frequent winding course it takes, presents the appearance of a succession of small lakes. It is bounded by lofty vine-clad mountains bristling with tower and keep, while below are seen opening glens through which the small streams rush on, bearing their tribute to the father of rivers. The villages have generally a most picturesque effect as they rise street above street upon the steep mountain-sides, their white walls scarcely visible amid the trellised vines. And now as we passed along we could plainly hear the songs of the peasants breaking on the soft stillness of the summer morning.

After a four hours' delightful sail we made Bonn in time for breakfast. The town itself has nothing remarkable except its situation in the valley of the Rhine and its being the seat of the second in rank amongst the Prussian universities.[1] We

[1] It was established on the model of that of Berlin so lately as 1818, and, except the University of Munich, is the most modern of Germany. As early as 1777 we find an Academy existed here, and in 1786 this became a chartered University, of which, however, at the conclusion of the French Revolutionary War no trace was left. The number of students, about one thousand, and the names of the two Schlegels, Niebuhr, and Walther (one of the first anatomists of Europe), attest sufficiently its present popularity. The Cabinet of

spent the entire of the first three days visiting collections, museums, libraries, &c.; and although Professor Goldfuss, our cicerone, is a very worthy and well-informed gentleman, yet I have no mind to make you more intimately acquainted with him, so that I shall at once invite you to sip your coffee with us in the garden of the University. Here all is gaiety, life, and animation, the military are seen mixing with the townsfolk, and no longer is there any distance kept up between professor and student. The garden was in olden times the pleasure-ground of a palace, once the residence of the Churfurst of Cologne, and still preserves much of its ancient beauty. The trees are for the most part of foreign origin, and formed into long shady avenues or dark sunless bowers, in each of which might be seen some happy family party enjoying their coffee, the ladies assiduously occupied in knitting and the men no less assiduously occupied in smoking. Occasionally the loud chorus of a Freischütz air told that the Burschen were holding their revels not far off, while the professors themselves, the learned expounders of dark metaphysics and eke the diggers of Greek roots, did not scruple to join in the gaiety of the scene, and might now be observed whisking along in the

Natural History at Popplesdorf is justly celebrated, and the collection of petrifactions is well known to the scientific world by the valuable work of Professor von Goldfuss ('Petrefacta Musei Univ. Bonnensio,' &c.) The library contains about 60,000 volumes, and includes a most remarkable cabinet of diplomatic seals and records. The Botanical Garden, which occupies upwards of nineteen acres, is considered one of the finest in Germany.

rapid revolutions of a German waltz. By the bye, let me warn any of my male readers to beware how he approaches a German dancing party if he be not perfectly *au fait* at waltzing. It is quite sufficient to be seen looking on to cause some dancer to offer you his partner for a *turn:* this is a piece of politeness constantly extended to foreigners, and is called *hospitiren;* but indeed every spectator seems to expect a similar attention, and at each moment some tall moustached figure is seen unbuckling his *schläger*, throwing his cap upon the ground, and in a moment he is lost among the dancers.

It was already far advanced in the night and the moon was shining brightly upon the happy scene ere we turned our steps homewards, deeply regretting our incapacity either to speak German or to waltz.

The following day the Drachenfels was the scene of a rural *fête*, and thither we proceeded, and as the distance is only three English miles we went on foot. The road lay through a succession of vineyards sloping gently towards the Rhine, which is here extremely rapid. A sudden winding of the river brought us in sight of the mountain from base to summit. The Rhine here runs between the Godesberg on the one side and the Drachenfels on the other. The latter rises to the height of fifteen hundred feet above the stream, perpendicular as a wall, its summit crowned by a ruined tower. The sides are wooded with large white oak-trees through which the road winds to the top in a serpentine

manner,—and thus as you ascend some new and altogether different prospect constantly meets the eye: at one moment you look out upon the dark forests and deep glens of the Sieben-gebirge, at another you see the river winding for miles beneath you through plenteous vineyards and valleys teeming with fertility; and far in the distance the tall spire of Cologne, rising amid its little forests of pinnacles, is still perceptible.

As we approached the picturesque effect was further heightened when through the intervals between the trees on the mountain-side some party might be observed slowly toiling their way upwards, the ladies mounted upon mules whose gay scarlet trappings gave all the appearance of some gorgeous pageant: and ever and anon the deep tones of the students joining in Schiller's Robber song, or the still more beautiful Rhein-am-Rhein, completed the illusion, and made this one of the most delightful scenes I ever observed.

We spent the entire day upon the mountains; and as we descended we observed a small figure standing motionless upon a rock at some distance beneath us. On coming nearer we discovered this to be a little girl of eight or ten years old, who, seeing us coming, had waited there patiently to present us with a garland of vine-leaves and Rhine lilies ere we crossed the river, as a charm against every possible mishap.

On our return we made the acquaintance of a professor whose name I no longer recollect—but he was a most agreeable and entertaining com-

panion, and he gave us a clear insight into the policy of the University. When speaking of the custom of duelling, he surprised us by the admission that such practices were winked at by the heads of colleges, hoping, as he said, that the students being thus employed and having their minds occupied about their own domestic broils, would have less both of leisure and inclination to join in the quarrels and disagreements of their princes and rulers: in the same manner and with the same intention as "the Powers that were" are said to have encouraged the disturbances and riots at fairs in Ireland, hoping that the more broken heads the fewer burnings of farms or insurrectionary plots. And now that I am on the subject of Irish illustration, let me give you a better one.

A friend of mine once on his way from Dublin to Dunleary[1] had the misfortune to find himself on a car drawn by an animal so wretched as to excite his deepest compassion, for in addition to a large surface of the back being perfectly denuded of skin and flesh, one end of a stick had been twisted on the creature's ear, the other end firmly fastened to the harness so as to keep the animal's head in the position of certain would-be dandies who deem it indispensable to walk *tête-à-l'air*. Not comprehending the aim of such apparently wanton cruelty, my friend asked the driver for an explanation of the ear torture. The fellow turned towards him with a look of half compassion for

[1] Dunleary changed its name to Kingstown in 1821 in honour of George the Fourth's visit.—E. D.

his ignorance struggling with the low waggery of his caste. "Troth an' yer honour," said he, "that's to divart his attinshion from the *raw* on his back."

And I really doubt not but that by "divarting their attinshion" the rulers of German universities have the best chance of success in managing the rude and indomitable spirits.

After a week spent in rambling through the glens and mountains of their delightful country, we set out for Andernach on our way to Coblentz. Here we arrived late in the evening, and went supperless to bed, as the Duke of Clarence, who had just arrived, had ordered everything eatable in the town for himself and his suite. On learning this, we had the good fortune to meet with an English family whom we had previously seen in Holland, and we journeyed together now like old acquaintances. I shall not attempt to delay you by any description of the scenery as we voyaged up the Rhine. The prospect continues to be beautiful until you approach Mayence; then the country becomes open, the mountains degenerate into sloping hills, and the course of the river is less winding.

At last we arrived in Frankfort, but there was little inducement to remain here, as we had no introduction to the Baron von Rothschild, the greatest entertainer and *bon vivant* in Europe. We merely waited to hear the opera (in which we were much disappointed), and set off for Cassel. I pass over all account of Daneker's statue of

Ariadne and the still greater lion, Professor Soemmering, for every one who has made the *petit* tour has described both; and I'll wager my dukedom there is not a young lady's album in Great Britain which does not contain some lines "On seeing" the beautiful figure I allude to. Ere I depart, however, let me mention a short but striking inscription which I read on the sun-dial in the town—"Sol me—vos—umbra regit." You may conceive that the German "schnell wagen" is admirably translated by the English words "snail waggon," when I tell you that we were three days travelling from Frankfort to Cassel, a distance of about 150 English miles.

A German diligence reminds one wonderfully of some huge old family mansion to which various unseemly and incongruous additions have been made, according to the fancy or necessity of its successive proprietors for ages. Conceive a large, black, heavy-looking coach to the front of which is placed a chariot, a covered car to the back, and on the roof a cabriolet; and imagine this, in addition to twelve phlegmatic Germans (who deem it indispensable to drink "schnaps" or "gutes bier" whenever there is a house to sell either), loaded with as much luggage as an ordinary canal boat in the country could carry—the whole leviathan drawn by nine wretched-looking ponies scarcely able to drag along their preposterously long tails,—and you will readily believe that we did not fly.

When we reached Cassel it was night, and the

streets were in perfect darkness—not a lamp shone out,—and we saw absolutely nothing till we drew up at the door of Der König von Preussen. On asking the following day the reason of the remarkable want of illumination, we were informed that when the almanac announced moonlight, it was not customary to light the lamps of the town,[1]—and the moon not being properly aware of this dependence upon her, was not a whit more punctual in Cassel than elsewhere.

Cassel is the most beautifully built and most beautifully situated town that I know of. Besides having a very excellent Opera, it boasts of one of the best museums in Germany, and of a very respectable Gallery of Painting and Sculpture. These form two sides of a great open *platz* or square; the Palace fills up the third side, and the fourth has merely a large iron railing, and affords a most magnificent view of a richly-wooded landscape, the background formed by the lofty mountains of Thuringia. In the middle of this railing a large gateway opens upon a broad flight of stone steps which lead down to a handsomely planted park. Following the windings of a silvery river which flows between banks adorned with blossoming shrubs and flowers, the scene brought to my mind the beautiful lines of Shelley:—

"And on that stream whose inconstant bosom
Was prank't under boughs of embowering blossom,

[1] It is strange that Lever considered this a remarkable phenomenon. The economical custom he refers to was not uncommon in many provincial towns—in Ireland at any rate—up to a very recent date.—E. D.

With golden and green light slanting through
Their heaven of many a tangled hue,
Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,
And starry river-buds glimmered by,
And around them the soft stream did glide and dance
With a motion of sweet sound and radiance."

At last we came in sight of Wilhelmshöhe, the country palace of the Electors of Hesse; but here, alas! the old Dutch taste in gardening prevails,—

"Grove nods to grove,
Each alley has its brother."

Wherever you turn your eyes, some deity in lead or marble meets you, who, from its agile attitude, seems in the act of taking flight at your approach. But the great wonder of the place is the famous *jet d'eau*, which is said to be 200 feet in height. To see this all Cassel assembles every Sunday on foot or in carriages; but though the effect of the water rushing over the rocks and forming hundreds of small cataracts is undoubtedly fine, yet the illusion is destroyed by arriving before the commencement of the exhibition, and seeing Hessian Cockneys watching some dry canal with patient anxiety and filling the empty vase of some basking Amphion. However, the scene was a gay one; and the splendid carriage of the Elector, who sat, in all the glory of a rich uniform and with moustaches *à la Prusse*, smoking most cavalierly, beside a lady (*not* his Duchess), was at once characteristic of the country and the individual.

After stopping in Cassel for three days, which

passed most agreeably, we took flight, and at the end of a forty miles' excursion—

> "In our stage-coach waggon trotting in,
> We made our entrance to the U-
> Niversity of Göttingen."

It was a fine night in the month of June, and the moon was shining brightly upon the towers and steeples of Göttingen, as the heavy diligence, thundering over the pavement of the main street, drew up within the *port-cocher* of Der Hof von England. We alighted, and entered a long low room in which about forty young men, evidently students, were seated at supper. At the head of the table sat the host himself, doling out soup from a vessel the proportions[1] of which had well-nigh led me to suspect that I had mistaken the University town, and was actually in company with the Heidelberg Tun.

We soon retired to our beds, but arose early in the morning and found, to our surprise, that even then—it was but six o'clock—the streets were crowded with students hastening to and from the various lecture-rooms, their long braided frock-coats and moustaches giving them a military air strangely at variance with their spectacled noses and lounging gait.

In three days I was enrolled a student of Göttingen, which, besides conferring on me the undoubted advantages of one of the finest libraries in Europe, with admission to various lectures, collections, botanical gardens, &c., also bestowed upon

me the more equivocal honour of being eligible to fight a duel, and drink *bruderschaft* in the beer-cellar of the University. I now thought it time to avail myself of some of the numerous introductory letters with which I had paved my trunk on leaving home; and accordingly, having accoutred myself in a suit of sables, and one hand armed with a large canister of Lundy-Foot (which I had brought with me as a propitiatory offering to the greatest nose in Europe) and my credentials in the other, I took my way through the town.

After wandering for some time my guide brought me at length to the door of a long, low, white house, with nothing remarkable about it save the silence and apparent desolation which reigned around, for it stood in the most unfrequented part of the city. On arriving I inquired for the professor, and was told by the servant that he was above-stairs in his cabinet; and having given me this piece of information she immediately returned into a little den off the hall from which she had emerged. I ascended the stairs, and found little difficulty in discovering the apartment, as all the doors were labelled with appropriate titles.

Herein! shouted in a voice of thunder, was the answer from within to my still small knock at the door. I entered, and beheld a small and venerable-looking old man, with a quantity of white hair floating in careless profusion upon his neck and shoulders. His head, which was almost preternaturally large, was surmounted by a green velvet cap placed a little on one side: he was grotesquely

enveloped in a species of fur cloak with large sleeves, and altogether presented the most extraordinary figure I had ever seen.

I was again roused by the sound of his voice interrogating me in no less than six languages (ere I found my tongue) as to my name, country, &c., for he at once perceived that I was a foreigner. I presented my letter and present, with which he seemed highly pleased, and informed me that his *guter freund*, Lord Talbot, always brought him Irish snuff; and then welcoming me to Göttingen, he seized my hand, pressed me down on a seat, and began talking concerning my travels, plans, probable stay at the University, &c. I now felt myself relieved from the awe with which I had at first contemplated the interview, and looked around with a mingled feeling of admiration and surprise at the odd *mélange* of curiosities in natural history, skulls, drawings, medals, and even toys, which filled the cabinet. But indeed the worthy professor was by far the greatest lion of the collection.

I observed that many of our newest English publications lay upon his table; and on my remarking it, he looked for a few minutes among them, and then drew out a small pamphlet, which he placed in my hand, saying at the same time that he had derived much pleasure from the perusal of it. I must confess it was with no small gratification I found it to be a description of the Fossil Elk (now in the Dublin Society House) written by Mr Hart of Dublin. He made many inquiries

concerning the author, and expressed his thanks for the delicate attention shown him in the presentation of the work. He then spoke of the London University, the plan of which lay before him; and on standing up to take my leave, I asked him whether the Gall and Spurzheim theories were to comprise part of my university creed and course of study. To which he answered, "No; but if you will wait till October we are to have a new system broached," and then, chuckling at this hit at the fondness of his countrymen for speculating, he pressed me to revisit him soon and see his collection.[1]

On my way homeward I was met by a student with whom I had become acquainted the day before at the *table d'hôte*. He invited me to drink coffee with him in one of the gardens outside the town, and on our way thither he told me that I should see a specimen of the Burschen life, as a duel was to be fought at the place to which we were then fast approaching. I could not conceive from the tone of my companion whether this was merely a piece of badinage on his part or not, for he informed me with the greatest indifference that the cause of the meeting was the refusal of one of the parties to pledge the other in beer, the invitation being given at a time when the offender was busy drinking his coffee. Such a reason for mortal conflict never entered even into my Irish ideas of insult. We had by this time arrived at the garden, which, crowded with swaggering savage-

[1] Blumenbach is sketched more fully in 'Arthur O'Leary.'—E. D.

looking students, most of them with their shirt-collars open and their long hair hanging upon their shoulders, was indeed deserving of a better fate than the code of the *Comment* had allowed to it. It was a tract of something more than an acre in extent, tastefully planted with flowering-shrubs and evergreens, and crossed by "many a path of lawn and moss"; and in a sequestered corner, shaded by one large chestnut-tree, stood the monument of Bürger, the sweetest lyric poet in any language, not even excepting our own Anacreon, Moore. I was aroused from my silent admiration of the weeping figure which bends so mournfully over the simple urn of the peaceful dead by a voice near me; and on turning around I beheld a tall athletic figure, denuded of coat and waistcoat, busily engaged polishing his broadsword. At this moment my friend arrived to inform me that there was no time to be lost,—we should scarcely get places, the duel having excited a more than usual degree of interest from the fact that the combatants had a great reputation as swordsmen.

We ascended a steep narrow stair which led into a large well-lighted room, but so full of figures, flourishing swords, and meerschaums, that some minutes elapsed before I could comprehend the scene before me. A space had been left in the middle of this chaotic assemblage. At a signal given the spectators all fell back to the walls, and at this moment two young men, wearing large leathern guards upon their breasts and arms, entered and took their places opposite each other. They

crossed their swords, and I could scarcely breathe, anticipating the conflict; but I soon discovered that they were only the seconds measuring the distance. This done, their places were taken by the principals, who, stretching out their arms until their swords crossed, were placed in the proper positions by their respective seconds. The umpire, or, to use the Burschen phrase, the Impartial, then came forward, and having examined the weapons, and finding all fair, gave the word "Streich ein," which was the signal for the insulted to make the first blow. With the rapidity of lightning his arm descended, and when approaching the shoulder of his antagonist he made a feint, and, carrying his point round, cut with the full force of a flowing stroke deep into the armpit of the other, whose hand, already uplifted to avenge the blow he could not avert, was arrested by the opposite second, it being *contre les règles* to strike while blood is flowing. He was borne home, and some weeks afterwards I heard that he had left the University, carrying with him disease for life.

This occurrence took not more time than I have spent in relating it. In a few minutes the room was cleared, the bystanders were drinking their coffee and enjoying their meerschaums, scattered through the gardens; and I returned to my lodgings fully impressed with the necessity of leaving a relic of my features behind me in Göttingen.

You will perhaps say that this is an extravagant picture of student life. It is not: such occurrences

are of everyday, and the system which inculcates these practices is not confined to one university, but with some slight modifications is found in all. The students of Halle and Heidelberg had their *Comment* (or Code of Honour) as well as their brethren of Jena and Göttingen, and it little matters whether the laws be called Burschenschaft or Landsmanschaft, the principle is the same.

The great fundamental maxim instilled into the mind of every young man entering upon his university career is the vast superiority that students enjoy over all classes in the creation, of what rank soever. The honest citizen of every university town is rudely denominated Philistine in contradistinction to the chosen few; and to such an extent is this carried, that no ties of relationship can mitigate the severity of a law which forbids the student to hold conversation with a burgher. This necessarily leads to counteraction, and woe be to the unhappy townsman who refuses aught to his lordly patron. I well recollect an adventure, the relation of which will set this system in a clearer light than if I were prosing for hours in the abstract.

I was lolling one evening on my sofa enjoying a volume of Kotzebue over my coffee, when my door opened and a tall young man entered. His light-blue frock and long sabre bespoke him a Prussian, no less than the white stripe upon his cloth cap, which, placed on one side of his head with true Burschen familiarity, he made no motion to remove. He immediately addressed me—

"You are an Englishman studying here?"

"Yes."

"You deal for coffee, et cetera, with Vaust in the Weender Strasse?"

"Yes."

"Well then, do so no longer."

This was said not with any menacing air but with the most business-like composure. He seemed to think he had said enough, but judging from my look of surprise that I had not clearly comprehended the full force of the *sorites* which had led to this conclusion, he added, by way of explanation,—

"I have lived two years in his house, and on my asking this morning he refused to lend me fourteen louis d'or."

Immediately perceiving the drift of this visit, I recovered presence of mind enough to ask what the consequence would be if I neglected this injunction.

"You will then fight us all. We are forty-eight in number, and Prussians. Adieu."

Having said this with the most provoking nonchalance, he withdrew, and the door closed after him, leaving me with an unfinished abjuration of groceries upon my lips.

Ere the following day closed my Prussian friend again visited me to say that Vaust, having complied with the demand made upon him, was no longer under ban.

And now that I have shown you the dark side of the picture, let me assure you that there is a better one. For firm adherence to each other, for true brotherhood, the German student is above

any other I ever met with; and although the principle of honour is overstrained, yet in many respects the consequences are good, and the chivalrous feeling thus inculcated renders him incapable of a mean or unworthy action. There is in everything they do at this period a mixture of highly wrought romantic feeling which strangely contrasts with the drudging, plodding habits which distinguish them in after days.

As I have all along preferred to give instances and facts rather than to indulge in mere speculation, I shall relate an occurrence which made too strong an impression on me ever to be forgotten.

I had been about a month in Göttingen, when I was sitting alone one evening in that species of indolent humour in which we hail a friend's approach without possessing energy sufficient to seek for society abroad, when my friend Eisendaller entered. He resisted all my entreaties to remain, and briefly informed me that he came to request me to accompany him the following morning to Meissner, a distance of about five leagues, where he was to fight a duel. He told me that to avoid suspicion in town the horses should wait at my door, which was outside the ramparts, as early as five o'clock. Having thus acquainted me with the object of his visit, and having cautioned me not to forget that he would breakfast with me before starting, he wished me good-night and departed.

I remained awake the greater part of the night conjecturing what might be the reason for this extraordinary caution, for I well knew that several

duels took place every day within the precincts of the University without mention being made of them, or any inquiry being instituted by the pro-rector or consul.

Towards morning I fell into a kind of disturbed sleep, from which I was awakened by my friend entering and halloing "Auf, auf! die Sonne sheint hell" (Up, up! the sun shines bright)—the first line of a well-known student "catch."

I rose and dressed myself, and, having breakfasted, we mounted our nags and set off at a sharp pace to the place of meeting. For the first few miles not a word was spoken on either side: my companion was apparently wrapped up in his own thoughts, and I did not wish to intrude upon his feelings at such a moment. At last he broke silence, and informed me that the duel was to be fought with pistols, as he and his adversary had vainly endeavoured to decide this quarrel in several meetings with swords. The cause of this deadly animosity—for such it must have been to require a course rarely if ever pursued by a student of resorting to pistols—he did not clearly explain, but merely gave me to understand that it originated concerning a relative of his opponent,—a very lovely girl, whom he had met at the Court of Hanover.

Having given this brief explanation he again relapsed into silence, and we rode on for miles without a word.

The morning was delightful, the country through which we passed highly picturesque, and there was

an appearance of happy content and cheerfulness on the faces of the peasants—who all saluted us as they went forth to their morning labour—that stood in awful contrast to our feelings, hurrying forward, as we were, on the mission of death.

At length we arrived at Meissner, where several of my friend's party were expecting him, and, having stabled our horses, we left the town and took a narrow path across the fields, which led to a mill about half a mile off. This was the place of rendezvous. On our way we overtook the other party, who had all passed the preceding night at Meissner,—and guess my surprise and horror to find that my friend's antagonist was one of my own intimate acquaintances, and the very student who had been the first to show me any attention on my arriving at Göttingen! He was a young Prussian named Hanstell, whose mild manners and gentlemanlike deportment had acquired for him the sobriquet of "der Zahm" (the Gentle). After saluting each other the parties proceeded to the ground together. There was little time spent in arranging the preliminaries. It was agreed, as both were well-known marksmen, to throw dice for the first fire. The seconds then came forward, and Hanstell's friends announced that Eisendaller had won. There was an instantaneous falling back of all but the two principals, who now took their positions about fifteen yards from each other. I watched them both closely, and never did I see men more apparently unmoved than they were at that moment. Not a muscle of their features

betrayed the least emotion or any concern of the awful situation in which they were placed.

The pistol was handed to Eisendaller with directions to fire before the lapse of a minute. He immediately levelled it, and remained in the attitude of covering his antagonist for some seconds; but at length, finding his hand becoming unsteady, he deliberately lowered his arm to his side, stiffening and stretching it to its utmost length, and remaining thus for an instant, he appeared to be summoning resolution for his deadly purpose. It was a moment of awful suspense. I felt my heart sicken at the bloodthirsty coolness of the whole proceeding, and had to turn away my head in disgust. When I again looked round he had raised his pistol, and was taking a long and steady aim. At length he fired. The ball whizzed through Hanstell's hair, and, as it grazed his cheek, he wheeled half round by an involuntary motion and raised his hand to feel if there was blood. I was looking anxiously at Eisendaller, but he still stood firm and motionless as a statue. I thought at one moment I saw his lip curl, and a half scowl, as if of disappointment and impatience, cross his features, but in an instant it passed away, and he was as calm and passionless as before.

It was now Hanstell's turn. He lost no time in presenting his weapon. There was a small red spot burning on his cheek that had been grazed which seemed to bespeak the fiery rage that had taken possession of his soul, for he felt that his

antagonist had done his best to take away his life. I shuddered to think that I was looking on my friend for the last time, for from the position in which I stood I could distinctly see that his heart was covered, and the moment Hanstell pulled the trigger would be his last.

Maddened with an agonising thrill of horror, I felt an almost irresistible impulse to rush forward and arrest the arm that was about to deprive Eisendaller of his life; but while a sense of what was due to the established customs of society on such occasions restrained me, I stood breathless with expectation of the fatal flash, Hanstell, to my amazement, suddenly raising his pistol to a vertical position, fired straight over his head, flung his weapon into the air, and rushing forward, threw his arms round Eisendaller, and bursting into tears, exclaimed, "Mein Bruder!"

We were wholly unprepared for such a scene, and although not easily unmanned, the overwrought feelings of all sought vent in a passion of tears. We soon left the ground, and, mounting our horses, returned to Göttingen.

On our way homeward there was little said. It happened that once, and only once, I found myself at the side of Hanstell. He conversed with me for a short time in an undertone, and on my asking him how he had felt at the moment of his adversary's missing him, he answered me that it was then his determined purpose to shoot him, and up to the last moment this determination remained unaltered, but at the instant of placing

his fingers on the trigger he thought he saw an expression about his face that reminded him of careless and happier days when they had studied and played together and had but one heart. "And I felt," said he, "as if I were about to become the murderer of my brother. I could have then more easily turned the pistol against my own breast."[1]

I was not long a resident in Göttingen ere I became considerably enamoured of many of the Burschen institutions. I had already begun to think that students were a very superior order of people,[2] that duelling was an agreeable after-dinner amusement, and that nothing could be more becoming or appropriate than a black frock-coat braided with a fur collar even in the month of July.

Having made this avowal, you will perhaps readily believe that I was soon a favourite among my fellow-students; and a circumstance which at that time added not a little to their goodwill and applause was the fact of my translating the English song, "The King, God bless him!" into German verse for a dinner to celebrate the anniversary of Waterloo.

My life now, although somewhat monotonous, was by no means an uninteresting or tiresome one. The mornings were usually occupied at

[1] Lever introduces the story of this duel into "The Loiterings of Arthur O'Leary."—E. D.

[2] One of Lever's intimates at Göttingen was a young German count. Later the Irish student discovered that his college chum—he calls him "Fattorini" in one of his letters, and he referred to him in conversation (according to Dr Fitzpatrick) as "Morony"—was no other than Louis Napoleon, the future Emperor of the French.—E. D.

lectures, and then I dined, as do all students, at one, after which we generally adjourned in parties to one another's lodgings, where we drank coffee and smoked till about three o'clock. After this we again heard lectures till we met together at Blumenbach's in the Botanical Gardens in the evening, when we listened to the venerable professor explaining the mysteries of calyx and corolla, some half-dozen young ladies by far the most attentive of his pupils. The evening was usually concluded by a drive to Geismar or some other little village five or six miles from Göttingen, when, having supped on sour milk thickened with brown bread and brown sugar (a beverage which, notwithstanding my Burschen prejudices, I must confess neither cheers nor inebriates), we returned home about eleven. And although I wished much that university restrictions had not forbade our having a theatre in the town, and also that professors were relieved from their dread of the students misbehaving, and would permit us to associate with their daughters (for I was as completely secluded from the society of ladies as ever St Kevin was), yet I was happy and content withal.

Such was the even tenor of my way when the news reached us that a rebellion had broken out among the students of Heidelberg, in consequence, it was said, of some act of oppression on the part of the professors. Nothing could exceed the interest excited in Göttingen when the information arrived. There was but one subject of conversation: lecture-rooms were deserted, the streets

were crowded with groups of students conversing in conclave on the one subject of paramount interest; and at last it was unanimously resolved to show the Heidelbergers our high sense of their praiseworthy firmness by inviting them to Göttingen, when news arrived that they had already put the University of Heidelberg in *verschiess*—that is, "in Coventry,"—and were actually at the moment on their way to us.

. . . . . .

III.

WANDERINGS.

1829–1830.

The Log-Book of a Rambler concludes with an account of a quarrel between the students and the professors at Heidelberg. To this university Lever transferred himself in the autumn of 1828, and after a short sojourn he proceeded to Vienna. In November his father, apologising for being unable to assist a relative in distress, declares that his rents were "being badly paid," and that his son Charles was "no small charge" upon him. In the same letter James Lever says that Charles intended to pass the winter at Vienna, and then to proceed to Paris, and that he was expected to arrive at home in April or May. "He writes in good spirits," says his father, "enjoys good health, and if I can supply him with money he does not wish to return soon."

From Vienna the young student proceeded, early in 1829, to Weimar, and at the Academy he made the acquaintance of Goethe. He describes Goethe's talk as being marked by touches of picturesque

and inimitable description; he had the gift of holding his audience spell-bound by some magic which it was impossible to describe.

From Weimar Lever travelled through Bavaria. To a friend he once stated that not only had he "walked the hospitals" of Germany, but that he had "walked Germany itself, exploring everything." Possibly this was an exaggerated account of his peregrinations through the Fatherland, but there can be no question that he saw at this time a great deal of Germany and of German life, and that his experiences impressed him and remained with him, vivid and pleasant memories.

In the beginning of March the wanderer found himself in Paris. From this city he wrote to his lifelong friend in Dublin, Alexander Spencer:—

"Paris, *Friday, March* 13, 1829.

"I am perfectly ashamed of the rapid succession in which my letters of late have inundated the family, yet in my present state of doubt, &c., I think it better to write at once to prevent any further mischief. I yesterday received a letter from Connor (Joe), informing me that he had forwarded to me in Paris from Vienna a Dublin letter of the 28th of last month. Now none such has arrived, and I have received already letters from Vienna bearing date 2nd March. This delay has rendered me very unhappy about the ultimate fate of my letter, and as Connor has already left Vienna, I have no means of ascertaining anything about it there. I have written to him at

[MS. undecipherable], where he is at present, but cannot receive his answer before five days, so that I think it better in the interval to stop payment of the bill, at all events until I can learn something about it. I have myself seen all the letters lately arrived in Paris from Vienna, so that its delay is in no wise attributable to the irregularity of the post in Paris.

"If this letter had arrived before, I should be now on my road homeward, but I am here in durance vile for want of it. But away with blue devils!

"Paris would be a delightful place had a man only 'gilt' enough: there are so many gay little varieties and vaudevilles, that you have never time to spare. The Palais Royal is a world in itself of all that is splendid and seducing, but with all these things a poor man has but a sorry time of it. Of the Italian Opera and of Verge I dare only read the *carte*, and content myself with a chop at Richard's and the Opéra Comique. Is it not (I ask you in all calmness) a thought that might lead to insanity to see these lucky ones of fortune sent out on their travels with fat purses, enjoying all the advantage of seeing and hearing what they neither relish nor comprehend, while many a poor fellow might reap advantage and improvement, but is debarred from the narrowness of his circumstances?

"I am now very anxious to see my family and find myself at home, although I believe I am now spending the last few days of a period I shall always call

the happiest of my life. I look back on my time in Germany with one feeling of unmixed pleasure; if there be the least tinge of regret, it is only because the time can never return, and that my happiest days are already spent.

"As Don Juan says, I make a resolution every spring of reformation ere the year runs out, but I certainly have more confidence in myself now than I ever before had. I will go home, free myself from all fetters of every species of acquaintanceship that can only consume time and give nothing in return, put my shoulder to the wheel, and in one year I shall find if I am ever to turn out well or not.

"Like every man who has lost time and let good opportunities escape him without an effort to profit by them, I employ my leisure hours in wishes that I had to begin the world again."

He speaks in a postscript of an English family who were stopping at his hotel:—

"I am going to convey one of the daughters, who is certainly pretty, to the Louvre to-day. She is to have £10,000, and that might not be a bad spec, but I should rather make my fortune by any other means. . . .

"The old padrone had the impudence to half propose my going to Italy as tutor to his young cub, but I answered him very brusquely. He was certainly very spirited in his offer of compensation, but my prospects have not come to that as yet.

Remember me most affectionately to father, mother, John, and Anne. . . .

"I wrote to you a few lines on the selvage of my note to my father. As the tenor of them may not have been very intelligible, allow me to repeat. If any letter from Vienna should arrive in Talbot Street, secure it for me. My mother might open it, and although she does not comprehend German, yet there might be more of it understood than I should like. I know your reflections very well at this moment, but you are in the wrong. As the song says,

'It's a bit of a thing to keep.'

But wait a week and you shall hear it all orally."

Spencer evidently came promptly to the aid of the traveller, for the same month of March found him once more in his native land.

It is stated by Dr Fitzpatrick in the later editions of his 'Life of Charles Lever' that the novelist obtained in 1824 an appointment as medical officer in charge of an emigrant ship bound from New Ross to Quebec. In 1824 Lever would have been only in his eighteenth year, and he would not have been in possession of any medical degree, nor would his brief experience as a student of the healing art have entitled him to undertake the medical charge of a passenger ship. Moreover, in a letter quoted by Dr Fitzpatrick, Lever speaks of spending the summer of 1829 in Canada, and

there is no suggestion that he made two voyages to America. It may be safely asserted that the date of the American voyage was not 1824; and in all probability 1829 was the year of the Hegira.[1] Lever appears to have embarked from New Ross in a vessel belonging to Messrs Pope of Waterford. A cousin of Lever, Mr Harry Innes, declares that it was through his good offices the young medical student succeeded in obtaining "the appointment, such as it was." Lever abandoned the ship upon her arrival in the St Lawrence. He does not speak of this voyage in any of his autobiographical writings, except that he tells us in a preface to 'Con Cregan'—a novel in which certain quarters of Quebec are intimately and graphically described—that once upon a time he "endured a small shipwreck" on the island of Anticosti. To his friend Canon Hayman he wrote (in June 1843) that the Canadian incidents in 'Arthur O'Leary' were largely personal experiences. He narrated to the canon an account of his landing in the New World,

[1] I discussed these points with Dr Fitzpatrick during his last visit to London, shortly before his death, and he stuck to his theory that 1824 was the date. He declared (as he declares in his book) that in the early years of the last century there was no Board of Emigration or other authority to interfere with the engagement of an unqualified or inexperienced man as ship's doctor, and that 1824 fitted in with his own opinions about Lever's various movements more easily than 1829; and that Lever speaks in his Log-Book of having heard the sound of Niagara. But the Log-Book was not completed until 1830. Subsequently I found in one of James Lever's letters, dated 1824, a statement that his son Charles was then studying medicine and surgery, and was "still in college." In 1901 the novelist's only surviving daugther, Mrs Bowes-Watson, writes: "Yes; my father went to the United States and Canada when he was a very young man. It must have been in 1829 or 1830."—E. D.

and of his rapid passage from civilised districts to the haunts of the red man. He was eager to taste the wild freedom of life with an Indian tribe. Lever, according to himself, found no difficulty in being admitted to Red-Indian fellowship, and for a time the unrestrained life of the prairie was a delightful and exhilarating experience. The nights in the open air, the days spent in the pine-forests or on the banks of some majestic river, were transcendently happy. He was endowed by the sachem with "tribal privileges," and he identified himself as far as possible with his newly-made friends. Ere long, however, he grew weary of the latitudinarianism and of the ingloriousness of barbaric life, and he began to sigh for the flesh-pots of the city. He contrived to hide his feelings from the noble red man, but a noble red woman shrewdly guessed that the pale-face was weary, discontented, home-sick. This woman warned the young "medicine man" that if he made any overt attempt to seek his own people he would be followed, and one of his tribal privileges would be to suffer death by the tomahawk. Lever dissembled, and (somewhat after the manner of the as yet uncreated Mrs Micawber) he asseverated that he would never desert the clan.

But his moodiness grew apace and his health gave way. The perspicacious squaw, knowing the origin of his malady, feared that the pale-face would die from natural causes. Moved by compassion, she planned, at the risk of her own life and reputation, the escape of the interesting young

stranger. An Indian named Tahata—a kind of half-savage commercial traveller—visited the tribe at long intervals, bearing with him supplies of such necessaries as rum and tobacco. Swayed by the promise of a good round sum, Tahata agreed to do his best to smuggle Charles Lever back to the paths of civilisation. The pair, after many vicissitudes, reached Quebec one bright frosty morning in December. "I walked through the streets," said Harry Lorrequer to Canon Hayman, "in moccasins and with head-feathers." In Quebec he found a timber merchant with whom his father had business transactions, and this hospitable man recompensed the trusty Tahata, and made Lever his guest; and when the ex-Indian was newly "rigged out" the merchant paid his passage back to the old country.

Lever averred that his description in 'Arthur O'Leary' of the escape of Con O'Kelly was a faithful account of his own adventures "deep in Canadian woods."

IV.

DUBLIN—CLARE—PORTSTEWART.

1830–1837.

During the year 1830 Lever busied himself in Dublin with the cult of medicine. Possibly his rough experiences in America had chastened him and had induced him to settle down to work. He attended diligently the Medico-Chirurgical—a school now extinct — and Sir Patrick Dunn's Hospital. He was also the life and soul of a medical debating society which met in a house in Grafton Street. One of his fellow-students describes him as being in the habit of speaking with such extraordinary volubility and energy, that it was suspected he was indulging in exhilarating drugs. Walking home one night with a friend from a supper-party, at which he had displayed astonishing merriment, Lever fell into a taciturn condition. On being rallied by his friend he apologised for his stupidity, or moroseness, by stating that, in order to tune himself up to concert pitch, he had that evening taken sixty grains of opium, and now that the excitement was over he was drowned in depression.

This curious fluctuation of spirits was a marked characteristic: even when he had abandoned the use of opium, he was to be found in the same hour overflowing with gaiety and sunk in the deepest dejection.

Though he worked hard and steadily at his studies in 1830, he did not fail to find sources of amusement. He railed against the sameness and the dulness of social life in Dublin. He complained of stupid dinner-parties where men of law and men of physic talked an unintelligible and irritating jargon. Dublin, he declared, was too professedly sociable to patronise the theatre; too sociable to form clubs,—too sociable, in fact, to go into society. He sighed for Göttingen and Heidelberg and for the more spacious life of German cities. Then a happy thought occurred to him. Why should he not establish in the Irish capital a Burschenschaft? He consulted Samuel Lover, — painter, song-writer, musician, novelist,—and joining forces with him, a club on the most approved German model was formed. Lever was elected "Grand Llama," and was entitled to be addressed as "Most Noble Grand." This club bore a strong resemblance to Curran's "Monks of the Screw," [1] but it was a less aristocratic, and probably a less bibacious, society. The members wore scarlet vests with gilt buttons, and a red skull-cap adorned with white tassels. They

[1] "The Order of St Patrick," to give this club its proper title, was founded by Barry Yelverton, afterwards Lord Avonmore. Curran was its leading spirit: he wrote its charter song, the famous "Monks of the Screw," quoted by Lever in 'Jack Hinton.' The Convent of "The Order of St Patrick" was in Kevin's Street, Dublin, and the

met in a room in Commercial Buildings, afterwards used as the Stock Exchange. Suppers, songs, and conversational jousts formed the staple of the entertainment. Lever, as president, occupied a chair placed upon a dais covered with baize, with a representation, in brass-headed nails, of a sword and tobacco-pipe crossed. Writing thirty-five years later about the club and its functions, he described it as "very fine fooling," and he goes on to say that no wittier, no pleasanter, and no more *spirituel* set of fellows ever sat around a punch-bowl.

Lever's fellow-student, Francis Dwyer (who afterwards rose to rank in the service of Austria), provides a pleasant description of the Dublin Burschenschaft. He avers that it gave its members a relish for intellectual enjoyment. "The most noble grand" conducted the proceedings with tact and delicacy, never permitting any lapse into indecorousness. "That he himself was a gainer," Dwyer insists. "He learned how to lead, and he also acquired a juster estimate of his own powers, and greater confidence in himself. No one, indeed, suspected what was really in the man, and some even shook their heads as to what good could ever come out of his unprofessional pre-eminence." He was learning in joyousness what he expounded in story.

Lever made his first appearance in print in

club had another meeting-place in the country, at Curran's residence, "The Priory," in Rathfarnam. Amongst the distinguished brothers of the order were the Marquis of Townshend (the Viceroy), Lord Mornington, Grattan, Flood, Lord Kilwarden, and the Earl of Arran. The club ceased to exist in 1795, but Lever, scorning anachronisms, introduced 'Jack Hinton' to the "Monks" at a later date.—E. D.

'Bolster's Cork Quarterly Magazine,' to which he contributed a paper entitled "Recollections of Dreamland." This essay concerned itself mainly with the writer's real or imaginary experiences of opium-eating and opium visions. In 'Bolster's' also appeared his first crude attempt at a story, "A Tale of Old Trinity." These were anonymous contributions, and their author never acknowledged them, and did not care to have any reference made to them. In January 1830 "a weekly chronicle of criticism, belles lettres, and fine arts" was started in Dublin under the title of 'The Dublin Literary Gazette.' In the third number of the 'Gazette' Lever commenced "The Log-Book of a Rambler." There are some other contributions of his, not of much value, to be found in the 'Gazette.' The periodical lived for only six months, and from its ashes arose 'The National Magazine,' a monthly publication which started in July 1831 and died during the following year. To 'The National' Lever contributed some papers—of no higher value than his miscellaneous contributions to the 'Gazette.'

In 1831 he would seem to have abandoned, temporarily, literary work, and to have toiled at his medical studies. In the summer of this year he obtained, at Trinity College, the degree of Bachelor of Medicine.[1] His father's town address was now 74 Talbot Street, and here Lever set up a practice;

[1] Dr Fitzpatrick states that he received at the same period a diploma as M.D. of Louvain *in absentia*, but Lever did not obtain the Louvain degree until he was established as a physician at Brussels.—E. D.

but business did not flow into Talbot Street, and the young physician soon began to display symptoms of restiveness.

Ireland was smitten by a terrible scourge in the year 1832—a sudden visitation of Asiatic cholera. A Board of Health engaged a number of medical men and despatched them to cholera-stricken districts. Lever applied to the Board for an appointment, and in the month of May he was established at Kilrush, County Clare.

Notwithstanding the gloom which pervaded the district, the young doctor contrived somehow to infect it with a little of his own high spirits. Physicians who worked with him through the awful time declared that wherever Lever went he won all hearts by his kindness, and kept up the spirits of the inhabitants by his cheerfulness. Some of his associates were driven to account for his wondrous exuberance, even after he had been sitting up night after night, by supposing that he was "excited in some unknown and unnatural manner." Most likely opium was accountable for the phenomenon.

In Kilrush Dr Lever quickly made the acquaintance of a group of companionable men—hard readers and good talkers,—and almost every evening they met at the house of one or the other, or at the cholera hospital. These men were to Clare as the guests at Portumna Castle were to Galway. They knew the country and the people intimately, and they were able to impart their

impressions in vivid and interesting guise. To the visitor from Dublin was disclosed another treasury of anecdote and a mine of material for character sketches: and he did not fail to avail himself of the golden opportunity.

Lever remained in Kilrush for about four months and then he returned to Dublin, leaving behind him in Clare many good friends, and bearing with him many pleasant and many ghastly memories.[1] He could not settle himself down to wait patiently for a city practice, and seeing an advertisement in a newspaper for a doctor to take charge of a dispensary at Portstewart, near Coleraine, he applied for the post and obtained it. In addition to the dispensary he was appointed to the charge of the hospital in Coleraine, and the Derry Board of Health invited him to look after their cholera hospital. He had a wide district to supervise, and, in addition to his cholera practice, he obtained a good deal of private practice. He was able to report in January 1833, to his friend Spencer, that money was coming in so fast that he was in no need of help from his father.

It seems opportune to refer here to a circumstance which had a most marked influence on the greater part of Lever's life — his attachment to Miss Kate Baker. He had fallen in love with her while he was a schoolboy, and his devotion to his wife—the most beautiful of all his characteristics—

[1] To give some idea of the awful havoc which the cholera created in Clare, it may be stated that one of Lever's associates, Dr Hogan, claimed to have treated 5000 cases.—E. D.

was unsullied to the day of his death. Miss Baker was the daughter of Mr W. M. Baker, who was Master of the Royal Hibernian Marine School,[1] situated on Sir John Rogerson's Quay. The Bakers moved from Dublin to the County Meath about 1830, Mr Baker being appointed to the charge of the Endowed School at Navan. Young Dr Lever was often to be found boating on the river Boyne with his sweetheart after his return from Canada. The doctor's father was anxious that his brilliant son should make a good match—that is to say that, like Mickey Free, he should "marry a wife with a fortune"; but much as Charles desired to please his father, he resolved that nothing should induce him to abandon the girl of his heart. His father's objection to Miss Baker was solely because of her dowerless condition. Charles endeavoured fruitlessly to enlist his mother's sympathies: Mrs Lever's faith in her husband's wisdom was not to be shaken. Finding that he could make no impression upon his parents, the young man married Miss Baker privately.

Oddly enough—and as a corollary to the absence of any official birth-record,—no accurate document recording the date of the marriage ceremony could be found when Lever's biographer, Dr Fitzpatrick, instituted a search. After long and wearisome investigations he discovered in Navan the Registry Book which chronicles the marriage of "Dr Lever." The entry is undated, and there is no mention of

[1] Mr Baker is described previously as "Deputy-Treasurer to the Navy and Greenwich Hospital."

the bride's name. The Rector of Navan was of opinion that the ceremony had been performed by a Mr Morton (who was a cousin of the Marchioness of Headfort), but he could throw no further light upon the nebulous entry: he offered a conjecture that the marriage was celebrated between the month of August 1832 and the month of August 1833. There is something delightfully Leverian about this. Despite the imperfectness of the record, Lever's choice was a singularly happy one. Amongst the many things which stand to Mrs Lever's credit are, that at an early stage of her married life she induced her husband to abandon the use of snuff, and she also cured him of another of the bad habits of his student days—indulgence in opium.

The probable date of Lever's marriage is September 1832. During this month he obtained leave of absence in order "to complete some important private engagements," and in all probability the most important of these engagements was his wedding. It is certain that the Portstewart dispensary doctor was a married man in January 1833. Early in that month he speaks (in a letter to Spencer) of his "household" attending a ball in Derry; and in the following May he writes: "I have two of Kate's sisters here, which makes it more agreeable than usual *chez nous*."

Early in this year Dr Lever sustained a sad blow: his mother expired suddenly in Dublin. Her death prostrated James Lever, now in his seventieth year. He could not bear to remain in the house where his wife had died, and he

retired to the residence of his eldest son at Tullamore. He never rallied from the shock, and at the end of March 1833 he died in Tullamore. This event finally broke up the Lever establishment in Dublin.

James Lever left all his possessions to his two sons: at the time it was computed that his estate would realise a sufficient sum to bring to each of them about £250 a-year, but it is doubtful if it produced this; and it is certain that Charles realised his share at an early stage of his literary career.

The severity of the cholera was now waning, and the terrible epidemic disappeared as suddenly and as mysteriously as it had come. Coleraine and Derry no longer required the services of Dr Lever, and he was thrown back upon his Portstewart dispensary. The most important man in Portstewart was a Mr Cromie. This magnate was lord of the manor, and he took a keen interest in local affairs. He was chairman of the Dispensary Board, and being of a strait-laced and somewhat evangelical disposition, he could not tolerate the exuberance of spirits displayed by the dispensary doctor. Lever tried to put the chairman into good humour by means which hitherto he had never found to fail; but Mr Cromie was not to be cajoled, and was even unwilling to admit the doctor's contention that he never neglected his duties, and that the poor people in the district could vouch for this.

Portstewart was then a rising watering-place, sufficiently gay during the summer months, but

deadly dull when "the season" was over. Its very dulness was a spur to Charles Lever. He could not set up a Burschen club, but he managed to make things lively in the neighbourhood. He was known as "the wild young doctor." Stories of his exploits were rife. Once, when galloping to visit a patient, a turf-cart faced him on the roadway. Not being able to pull up his horse, he leaped him over the cart—just as Charles O'Malley "topped the mule-cart" in Lisbon. Another reminiscence of him was that, in order not to disappoint his young wife, he attended a ball given at Coleraine by the officers of a regiment stationed there, and he spent the entire night riding backwards and forwards between the ball-room and the house of a sick child. On another occasion he organised a motley-clad expedition to attend a fancy-dress ball given by Lady Garvagh. Vehicles being scarce, the expedition had to press into its service a furniture van, a hearse, and a mourning coach. Returning in the small hours, the van (in which Lever, in fancy dress, was travelling) broke down near Coleraine, and the wild doctor endeavoured to obtain shelter under the roof of a gentleman who resided at Castle Coe; but the dwellers at the castle fancied that the visitors were travelling showmen or gipsies, and Lever and his party were obliged to spend the night in the van. Next morning horses were procured, and the furniture-waggon made a triumphal entry into Coleraine.

These and other pranks gave offence to the

austere Mr Cromie. In June Lever wrote to Spencer the following letter:—

"As to matters here, the dispensary is likely to go by the board, — the private quarrels and personal animosities of rival individuals warring against each other will most probably terminate in its downfall, and Mr Cromie since his marriage has become very careless of all Portstewart politics. The loss would not be very great, but at this time even £50 per annum is to be regretted. However, matters may ultimately be reconciled, though I doubt it much. In fact, the subscribers know by this time that the county practice, and not the dispensary salary, would form the inducement for any medical man to remain here, and they calculate on my staying without the dispensary as certainly as with it, and that my services can be had when wanted, without the necessity of a retaining fee. This is a northern species of argument, but unfortunately a correct one. . . . As for myself, I am just as well pleased [at the lack of gaiety and festivities] as if we had balls and parties, for I find a man's fireside and home his very happiest and pleasantest place. . . . Dr Read is endeavouring by all possible means to usurp the Portstewart practice, and has even got his mother-in-law, the archdeacon's widow, to purchase a house and reside here. But the game is not succeeding, and whatever little there is to be made is still, and likely to be, with me."

Finally Lever triumphed in a measure over Mr Cromie, and was temporarily lifted out of his gloomy mood. Domestic affairs were running a pleasant course. In September a daughter[1] was born to him, and in sending the good news to Dublin, he adds that "the neighbours," in honour of the event, had sent him presents "sufficient to stock a garrison for a siege."

The following year found him again in a troubled condition. Portstewart was displaying symptoms of decline as a watering-place. He writes in August 1834 to Spencer:—

"If prospects do not brighten here—of which I see little chance—I must pitch my tent somewhere else, as when once a fashionable bathing-place begins to decline, its downfall is all but inevitable. I am much disposed to book to Canada, for though the scale of remuneration is very small, there is plenty of occupation for my craft—and living is cheap. An English watering-place would undoubtedly be more to my liking, but would require more of *l'argent* than I am likely to have."

During the following year, in addition to dispensary worries, Lever was seriously disturbed about the state of his health. Rheumatism assailed him, and his left arm (according to himself) was "like a dead man's limb." He consulted his

[1] The first-born was christened Julia. She married Colonel Nevill, afterwards Commander of the Forces of the Nizam of Hyderabad. She died at "Nevill's Folly," Hyderabad Deccan, early in the year 1897.—E. D.

former professor, Surgeon Cusack, who told him that probably he would have to abandon Portstewart, and seek a more genial winter climate.

To Spencer he wrote in June :—

"Our prospects here are black enough. Mr Cromie and his party have, by an overwrought severity in manners and opinion, completely terrified all people from frequenting this as a watering-place, and we are now destitute of all society,—save a few widows and old maids come to live on small means and talk scandal. The complete desertion of the place by all people of means has rendered my occupation gone, and my once high and mighty functions might also—and must be—transmitted to some country apothecary. Partly from illness, and partly from the causes I have mentioned, I have scarcely done anything these five last months."

During the summer, however, the sick man rallied. His spirits rose as he observed the little watering-place filling up once more. In August his report to Dublin was that Portstewart was fast becoming a paradise for the lodging-house keepers, — cottages fetching £15 to £20 a-month. He goes on to say that "about four thousand strangers are here — glad to get any accommodation—living in hovels and sleeping on the ground. There is a great deal of company-seeing — but all heavy dinners. No music, nor any pleasant people to chat to. I

have been gradually getting more illegible," he continues, "till I find the last of this letter resembling a Chaldean MS. I am ready to shout from the pain of my right elbow,—my horse fell and rolled over me, and in the endeavour to rise fell back upon me. Those who saw the occurrence thought I was killed on the spot."

Presently he formed one of the most important acquaintanceships of his life. Amongst the many visitors to Portstewart was William Hamilton Maxwell, Rector of Balla, near Castlebar. Maxwell had published his 'Stories of Waterloo' in 1829, and his 'Wild Sports of the West' in 1830. To Lever at this period Maxwell was a literary demigod. The two men exchanged views about Irish life and character, and Maxwell fired the dispensary doctor with a desire to beget a novel of adventure.

If ever a writer was handsomely equipped for the creating of tales of romantic adventure or boisterous Irish humour, that writer was assuredly Charles Lever. He had spent his early days in an atmosphere charged with recollections of a brilliant era and a mettlesome, laughter-loving people. As a mere youth he had displayed a love for good books, a faculty of improvisation, and a facility in the art of composition. Endowed with an excellent education in his own country, he had enlarged his knowledge of life and literature by travel, observation, and study in foreign countries. He was a member of a profession whose duties bring one into close touch with all sorts and conditions of

men. His imagination was lively and fertile, his vision kaleidoscopic, his power of observation quick and true. He had a high sense of honour and an unaffected admiration for noble and valorous deeds: his appreciation of wit and humour was keen and sound, his love of fun and frolic ebullient.[1]

He had been indulging, in a desultory fashion, in literary vagaries during the dull months of his Portstewart life,[2] but he had not put much heart into his literary work since the death of 'The National Magazine.' Maxwell, however, had re-animated him; and when the author of 'Stories of Waterloo' returned to the West of Ireland (in the autumn of 1835), Lever got into communication with editors of various publications. He was especially anxious to get a hearing at the office of 'The Dublin University Magazine' (launched in January 1833). The earliest story of his which appeared in this interesting periodical was "The Black Mask." There is a somewhat curious history concerning this tale. In 1833 Lever had entrusted the manuscript of the story to a Dublin acquaintance, instructing him to deliver it to a certain publisher in London. No acknowledgment came from this publisher—who, possibly, was not in the habit of corresponding with unsolicited contributors—and at length, failing to obtain any reply to his letters

[1] Edgar Allan Poe pronounced Lever's humour to be the humour of memory and not of the imagination,—a criticism which is only a half truth.

[2] A cousin of Lever, Mr Harry Innes, told Dr Fitzpatrick that Lever, during his Portstewart days, had written a considerable portion of a work on Medical Jurisprudence.—E. D.

of inquiry, Lever rashly concluded that the manuscript had been lost. He re-wrote the story and sent it, in 1836, to Dublin. When "The Black Mask" appeared in the May number of 'The Dublin University Magazine,' William Carleton, the novelist, informed the editor that not only was the tale a translation, but that it was a flagrantly pirated version of a translation which had appeared in an English publication called 'The Story-Teller.' Lever was furious at being charged with a literary fraud, but he hardly knew how to answer the charge. Fortunately young Mrs Lever had seen her husband writing the first version of the story, but even this did not explain everything satisfactorily. Eventually it was discovered that the envoy to whom Lever had entrusted the MS. of "The Black Mask" in 1833 had surreptitiously disposed of it to 'The Story-Teller.'

Throughout the year 1836 Dr Lever continued to supply 'The Dublin University Magazine' with contributions—short stories and reviews. He had quickly established pleasant relations with James M'Glashan, the publisher of the magazine.'[1] A letter written in May to M'Glashan has been preserved:—

[1] James M'Glashan's early history is not very clear. He migrated to Dublin, probably in the Twenties. About 1830 he was secretary of the Dublin Booksellers' Association. He was with Messrs Curry from 1840 to 1846 at 9 Upper Sackville Street. In 1846 he went to D'Olier Street, and was in business there with Mr M. H. Gill until 1856, when Mr Gill bought him out of the firm of M'Glashan and Gill.

The foregoing facts have been communicated to me by Mr Michael Gill, B.A., Director of Messrs M. H. Gill & Son, Ltd., and a grandson of the M. H. Gill who was M'Glashan's partner.—E. D.

"My dear Sir,—I have just seen the advt. of contents of 'University' for June, among which the 'Post Mortem' holds honourable station, and hope it may merit it. I write these few lines hurriedly to ask if you will spare space for a 'story'[1] in your July number, as I have one ready, and will send it if you desire. As I am going with Maxwell on an expedition on Thursday, will you let me know your reply before then?

"Maxwell and Bentley have been sparring, so you are not to expect the review of 'Picton,' as the wild sportsman is in great dudgeon with the mighty publisher.

"Whenever anything can be got from him worth your while, I shall press for it. At present he is toiling for the 'Bivouac,' which is to appear immediately."

The four following letters written to Spencer afford interesting glimpses of the young doctor's life at this period:—

"Portstewart, *June* 13, 1836.

"I have reaped no small self-praise from the circumstance that I have not been a bore to you for nearly three months, for it only wants a few days of that time since we parted in Dublin. How I have existed in that space I can scarcely say, but one fact is undoubted—not from the proceeds of my profession.

"There has been nothing to do here for the

[1] "The Emigrant's Tale."

whole *cordon sanitaire* of medicals that invests this and the surrounding country; and idleness—unbroken idleness—has been our portion, and you well know, my dear Saunders,[1] the *far niente* is not *dolce* when it is compulsory, and thus, if I have been working little I have grieved much.

"It was, as far as occupation is concerned, fortunate that I became a scribbler, but in respect to money the Currys are slowest of the slow, and so I am again on my beam-ends for cash, with some petty debts boring me to boot. I have applied to the Currys, but not so pressingly as my circumstances demand, for a man does not willingly expose his poverty to strangers; and it is rank bad policy—if avoidable—for a poor author to confess his poverty to his publisher.

"As my summer commences in July I may yet do something, but I have made up my mind to leave this,—its reputation as a fashionable watering-place is fast going, if not gone, and I am left musing like Marius amongst the ruins of past greatness, or 'the last rose of' anything else you can conceive of loneliness and misery.

"Whenever you do write, give me a hook and a head as to my prospects, for I can hope on with the assistance of the smallest gleam of light that ever glimmered from a taper.

"I sent you a paper a few days since with extracts from an article of mine. Did you get it?

"Since the appearance of the said article, and in consequence thereof, I have been written to by

[1] "Saunders" was a nickname given by Lever to Spencer.

Blackwoods to become a contributor. This is at least flattering, and may be profitable."

"PORTSTEWART, *June* 23, 1836.

"I saw some time since an advertisement in a literary journal for an editor for an English paper published in Paris, salary £200 per annum—he being expected to place in the stock purse of the concern £200, for which he is to receive six per cent. This I replied to, and have just got all the particulars, and I may have the appointment if I please. The capital, it being joint stock, is £8000. They have sent me a list of subscribers and account of profits—very flattering,—and the proprietor is the well-known [Reynolds] of the Library, Rue St Augustine—a most respectable and wealthy individual.

"My only reason for entertaining the proposition is my anxiety to emancipate myself from the trammels of this failing place, where I see my prospects daily retrograding, and every chance of my being left the only resident in a healthy population.

"My intention is, if I accept, to establish myself as a doctor in Paris,—there are 40,000 English residents,—and then by my literary labours pave the way to future advancement in my profession."

"PORTSTEWART, *June* 29, 1836.

"I have thought over the proposition mentioned in my last letter until my head is half crazy. There are many things in it which I could wish

were otherwise than they are, but what is there to be found which gives unqualified satisfaction? My object is to go where there is a field for exertion—whether I may be able to cultivate it or not remains to be tried; with £200 and my own means we could at least get on tolerably well if practice did not follow: but I hope it would, and certainly I would endeavour to make it my chief object. I did not mention in my last that a dividend of the profits would be allowed for £200 as well as 6 per cent. . . . Since I wrote I received a line from Maxwell, who is in Paris, and to whom I wrote requesting that he would call on Mr Reynolds and mention my application, &c. He (Maxwell) speaks very favourably of Mr R., but by all means advises my going over to Paris immediately, and this, though attended with considerable expense, I have almost resolved on doing. If successful, the trip will be well worth the £30 it will cost; if otherwise, it is worth so much to escape a bad speculation—that is, taking it for granted that my foresight will detect its prospects of success or failure. I must only do the best I can, and see as far into the milestone as I am able. . . . I am resolved, if I go to Paris, to use my senses without bias or prejudice. . . . If I continue in my present mind I shall leave this on Saturday and be in Paris the following Friday."

"PORTSTEWART, *July* 19, 1836.

"I returned from Paris on Thursday last, having contrived within the space of fifteen days to travel

there and back, spending one day and a half in London and five whole days in Paris. As to the result of my inquiry on the subject of my trip: I have thought it better, after a deliberate calculation of every bearing of the matter, to decline accepting the Journal.

"Independently of the great sacrifice of time to a pursuit foreign to my profession,—and this I only learned was indispensable on my going to Paris,—I find the expense of living—rent in particular—far beyond my expectations or means, lodgings in any respectable quarter ranging from 3000 to 4000 francs per annum (£120 to £160). The great influx of English, either resident or visitants, has rendered Paris a close competitor with London for extravagance. The changes which the few years since last I saw Paris have brought about, have rendered it the most magnificent city imagination can conceive. New esplanades, ornamented with the most stately and beautiful public buildings, are everywhere to be met with, and all the *agréments* of out-of-door life abound in Paris. I was present at the trial of [ ], and, in the few days of my stay, contrived to see a good deal both of places and persons. I cannot but regret that the speculation has not fully answered my expectations; but, when considering the time required, the matter of remuneration, the uncertainty of its continuance, and the great danger of again [risking] a fall into the world of a new and foreign city, I am afraid to venture though shockingly tempted. I have returned home to re-

main, at least until something decidedly better offers."

"The trip to France, however pleasant and healthful," he writes to M'Glashan in July, "has not added to my purse's weight. . . . If you desire a continuance of my contributions, you can mention when you write. . . . Maxwell dined with me yesterday. I don't think you can calculate on much from him at present, as, besides fighting with Bentley the whole battle of Waterloo over again, he is writing a new book for Macrone. . . . I hear Butt[1] is about to be my neighbour, and rejoice that he is not leaving the Magazine while he is extending the field of his labours."

Maxwell's arrival in Portstewart in the summer of 1836 helped to chase away Dr Lever's gloomy forebodings. In the autumn, when the season was over, he set to work vigorously and made his first bold plunge into the sea,—he regarded his pre-1836 writings merely as dabblings in shallow water. On the 29th of October the first chapter of 'Harry Lorrequer' was despatched to Dublin, accompanied by the following note to M'Glashan :—

"I send you Article No. 1 of a series which will include scenes and stories at home and abroad,—some tragic, others (as in the present case) ludi-

[1] Isaac Butt, the editor of 'The Dublin University Magazine,' afterwards a famous advocate, and the "father of the Home Rule movement."—E. D.

crous. I have had an invitation from Colburn to furnish a two or three volume affair, but I am not in the vein for anything longer or more continuous than magazine work at present."

The following month he wrote again to M'Glashan :—

"PORTSTEWART, *Saturday night.*

"In a gale of wind, slates flying, and the chimneys (such of them as are not blown down) smoking.

"I send you by private hand the proof of chaps. iii., iv., and v. of 'Lorrequer,' and am sincerely happy to find they are to your likings, and I hope in the ensuing chapter, which I expect to transmit next week, to do something better. Meanwhile, no comparison with my friend Carleton, I beseech you—so far, very far, indeed, beyond the standard by which I could wish anything of mine measured.

"I hope you may like the enclosed, as you will, better than the preceding chapters. I purpose in the succeeding ones to give you 'Dr de Courcey Finucane's Adventures in Bath,' 'First Love,' &c. I have, in plain truth, written all the night, besides employing another hand[1] to transcribe, for which the printer will remember me in his prayers. Now, 'Fair play is a jewel,' as Dr Finucane would say; so send me a proof, if possible, before Wednesday."

M'Glashan's instinct told him that 'Lorrequer'

[1] His wife's.

was a windfall. Fearful lest Colburn should secure the young Irish humorist, he despatched to Portstewart an ambassador[1] whose instructions were to secure Lever at any cost. If money would not buy him, flattery might win him. Lever, always a victim to impressions of the moment, and always hungry for praise, fell an easy victim to M'Glashan's ambassador. Ere long the knowledge that his writings were in brisk demand caused him to dream of a wider life than Ulster could promise; his mercurial mind travelled back to the bright days when he had been a sojourner on the Continent. On January 30 he wrote to Spencer:—

"After doctoring many for the last few days I am at last stricken with influenza, and hardly able to answer your letter, which I am most unwilling to defer lest I grow worse, not better. I am most gratified to find that Lady Charleville has interested herself for me, and hope the best results from it. It is singular enough—and perhaps fortunate too—that it is through Sir George's mother, the Duchess of Richmond, whom Alderman Copeland has procured as a patroness, [? she] has applied, so that if the opportunity to serve me is in her power she may perhaps feel disposed for it.

"As to Moatfield, I thought I should have got £500, but if you think that it is out of the question, offer it to John for £400, and let him, if he accepts, have any convenience as to half of it he

[1] Mr George Herbert—afterwards a well-known Dublin publisher. —E. D.

proposes. Of course this is contingent on my going to Brussels, for if I do not I shall not want it—at least at present. If Mr Crowther—for whose misfortune I am really sorry — goes to Brussels I shall be glad to hear, for there are many points I am most desirous to be informed upon.

"Cusack was right in respect to the prohibition to practise,—there is a *permis* to be procured from the Belgian government before any foreign physician can prescribe; but this, if I am connected with the Ambassador, will be, I suppose, a mere matter of form.

"*PS.* — The influenza, which has been killing others, has been keeping me alive, though I find my outlay always a very respectable distance in advance of my income. The rival doctor here has been dangerously ill, and I have been greatly engaged.

"I have just got a letter from Brussels from another and more competent source than the former. 'It speaks encouragingly of my prospects, there being 'but one good English physician in Brussels, and he constantly in jail for debt. It is right' (I quote the words) 'to mention that the physician's fee is but five francs, and that living is much more expensive than formerly, and the English residents fewer in number.' This, on the whole, is somewhat gloomy, but I know many well-informed persons who think the small fee more profitable, as it is always offered and taken for

each visit, and tendered for illnesses which rarely would elicit the guinea. On the whole, I am more discomfited at the dearness of the place than the amount of the remuneration."

At the end of February he made up his mind finally to voyage to Brussels, and he announced to Spencer his intention of travelling by way of Belfast, Liverpool, London, and Antwerp.

"PORTSTEWART, *Feb.* 24, 1837.

"I have just received intelligence that the party who interests himself to obtain for me an introduction to Sir G. S. has failed, and I am again stranded. What course to take I really know not, but think my best plan, so far, at least, as I can see, is to set out for Brussels and present such letters as I already have, making myself acquainted with the bearings of the whole matter—to such an extent, at least, as personal observation can point. Longer hesitation would be not only miserable but injurious, for, having been obliged to make known my intention to many persons here, the thing has got abroad, and I am considered *en route* already. Must, therefore, either resolve to go—or stay—without further delay. The expense of the *voyage d'expérimente* will, I know, be very heavy, do what I can,—and I can but ill spare the money,—but what else to do I know not. I wish you would write to John and say that if his friends have not heard from their correspondents, perhaps they would give me a

letter to wait on Lady Seymour, which would decide the affair at once. Copeland will give his letter to Bulwer, and I have already one to Crampton. Should I fail in becoming known to and acknowledged by the Ambassador, I have great doubt that it would be prudent to embark in so bold an enterprise under any other sanction or patronage whatever. . . . I am writing away for Currys' Magazine, and I have got into a series which will occupy some months, but the pay is small (seven guineas a sheet), and I cannot get a settlement until several sheets are due. . . .

"I shall merely stay," he continues, "in London one day to procure an introduction to Mr Bulwer, and wait on those persons who interested themselves for me. . . . I go with no very sanguine hopes of success, and yet I think it better to make the trial than afterwards to regret that I haven't made it. One thing I have determined on — that I am ready to make any sacrifice of comfort or personal indulgence should my chance of succeeding give me any fair reason for remaining there [at Brussels]."

On the 27th March Mrs Lever wrote from Portstewart to Alexander Spencer :—

"I had a letter from Charles on Thursday, in which he expressed a strong wish that you should know what he is about. He left this for Brussels on the 1st of March, and will be detained there until after the 28th or 30th. I am not sure if

you are aware that a *permis* is necessary before any physician can practise there, and it is obtained by the person applying for it undergoing an examination. Strange to say, the interested persons, the M.D.'s of Belgium, are the examiners. Charles, however, has been making interest to obtain it without—and hopes to succeed. I shall give you an extract from his letter. 'I cannot give any idea of the excitement my arrival has caused. Six families have written to Dublin to investigate my claims, character, &c. . . . Sir George Seymour' —he had two very handsome introductions to the Ambassador—'told Crampton that if I am not the man destined to carry away *all* the practice he is greatly mistaken. If I get the *permis* (and I dont know whether I shall or not) the game is certainly dead in my favour.' Another extract. 'Sir Hamilton Seymour continues to be most kind, and is doing all possible to forward my views. In fact, if great anxiety on all sides here can ensure success, I have every prospect.' Speaking of living in Brussels, he says: 'It is fully as cheap as most parts of Germany, and half—actually half—as cheap as Paris. I can get a house unfurnished for £60 per annum, and furnish it complete from top to bottom for £150.' An extract from the letter before the last. 'Different persons of quite different opinions on all things, agree in saying that from £800 to £1000 per annum can be made here by the first man. Ten families of the first rank here have been mentioned to me as being ready to support me if I stay.'"

On April 6th Mrs Lever wrote again to Spencer:—

"The commission have been tormenting him by repeated delays, putting off the examination of his papers, with the intention, he thinks, of disgusting him with the whole business, and they had nearly succeeded, but on sending for his passport to leave at once, Sir G. Seymour went to him and requested him to remain until Monday (last), and that if there was any delay then he would demand an immediate answer being given. I will give you an extract from his letter. 'If my permission be not granted on Wednesday next, or a perfect certainty of obtaining it in a day or two, I shall start from this and bring you over, for I'm resolved on practising here with the prospect held out to me. Already I am making about a pound a-day, and Sir H. Seymour said only five minutes since, I cannot recommend you getting into any scrape, but if you do so, I shall certainly do my best to get you out again. . . . All the high English here are ready to memorial the king to have me retained here.' He expects to be home on Sunday next, as he intended starting for Ireland the moment he obtained an answer, favourable or otherwise. . . .

"I hope you will excuse my being so troublesome, but I am sure Charles will remain a very short time here, and I also know he must have money to move us and begin housekeeping, so should be most grateful if you could manage the

loan[1] in any way, and I hope it will not be necessary for him to go by [way of] Dublin, as it would be additional expense. My health is very bad, and I should rather avoid any travelling that was not absolutely necessary. He has been spared knowing how ill I have been by the uncertainty of his stay in Brussels having prevented my writing to him since Sunday fortnight."

A letter from Lever, dated April 5, reached Spencer shortly after the receipt of Mrs Lever's note.

"Will you send by this post a few lines to my wife," the writer asks, "and say you have just heard from me, and that I hope to leave this [Brussels] on Saturday at farthest, and probably will come home by Belfast if I miss the Derry steamer on Tuesday, which would pass my door on Wednesday,—this is as near as I can say? You must send me any money you can when I reach Portstewart, to pay my small debts, as I shall possibly leave a week after my arrival. Let Kate know this, and say I would write to her, but wrote last Sunday by Mr Kane. I am greatly fagged and fretted by the delays and anxieties of my position."

[1] Alexander Spencer managed all Lever's business affairs in Dublin. The loan Mrs Lever refers to here is a loan upon "Moatfield," which property her husband was loath to sell outright: it enshrined pleasant memories. In the days of Lever's wooing, the garden of Moatfield had furnished many a bouquet for Miss Baker.—E. D.

The same day that he wrote to Spencer he forwarded a letter to M'Glashan :—

"My dear Sir,—The permit to practise is a matter so difficult to obtain, that in fact every English physician has been deterred from trying Brussels for that one and sole cause, and I have come here only to discover that there is a great opening for a fairly qualified and well introduced man,—the others who have been here for several years (before any permit was necessary) being underbred and uneducated men, and unfit for anything but second-class apothecary practice. But still the right to practise, even among the English, is denied to all, except on passing an examination before a jury *d'examen des médecins*, all interested in the rejection, and only anxious to make Brussels a close borough for themselves and their friends. So stand the affairs: and although I am appointed physician to the Embassy, and am this instant in personal attendance on the Ambassador, I have no right, properly speaking, to practise, nor is it likely that I shall obtain it. However, unpleasant as this undoubtedly is, I find that by the protection of my Ambassador, and the favour of the Government,—who are through his kind and most unwearied endeavour to serve me, my friends,—I may continue to exercise *les droits d'un médecin*, if not *sans peur*, at least *sans reproche;* and if they were to proceed legally against me, the king will interfere and remit my fine; at least so they tell me, and at last, if the

persecution should continue, I have only to study for a month and obtain a Louvain degree, which settles all difficulties by one stroke. As it is, I am here in good practice with bad pay. They say £600 a-year can be made. I do not believe it; but I think £400 might, and as everything is moderate, except rent and taxes, a man could do very comfortably on that. I intend leaving this on Friday next to bring over my wife and weans, and settle at once.

"My patients here are all the first people,—Lord Stafford, Lady Faulkner, &c., among the number,—and all express a desire to keep me and serve my interests. In a word, I never met more kind offers, nor have I ever witnessed a fairer prospect, to the extent it offers, of success.

"I must raise a little money to furnish a house and bring over my family; and if you would put me on the way to obtain £200 or £250, I would not sell Moatfield. Otherwise I shall do so, as I have no time to lose. My step does not admit of delay, and when I reach home I must leave for Brussels almost immediately,—the opening is such that some one must fill it at once."

Lever set out from Portstewart in the first week of May 1837.

V.

LETTERS FROM BRUSSELS.

1837–1842.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"16 Rue Ducale, Brussels, *May* 12, 1837.

"We reached this on Monday afternoon, having had a most agreeable journey through England, which we all bore admirably, and after a passage of twenty-two hours reached Antwerp so little fatigued that we at once set out for Brussels, where we had the pleasure to find that our house was ready for us and perfectly prepared for our occupation. We at once drove thither, and have avoided all hotel expenses, and have the additional comfort of being at once at home after so much journeying. I have, of course, but little to communicate of Brussels since my arrival, save that I find myself as safe as ever in the estimation of the English here, and am already hard at work. Lady Faulkner and several of my old attaches have again sent for me, and although the *permis* cannot be obtained sooner than August, if then, I have

every hope that I escape (some time) any molestation. My only loss on the road was a carpet-bag containing all my groom's clothes, and amongst them a new suit of dark-grey livery, for which I had just paid £4, 10s. and was never worn. These were left behind in the George Hotel, Dale Street, Liverpool, and although I have written about it I have not received any answer, and fear it is irretrievably gone. If there could be found any means of getting at the matter through Dublin, I would be extremely glad,—for if the bag were forwarded to the Burlington Hotel, Burlington Street, London, addressed to me, Brussels, by the Victoria steamer for Antwerp, it would still reach me and save me some money, and my man much raggedness.

"Mrs Innes is quite correct in her estimate of the Tighes in one respect, for previous to my going to Ireland they employed me several times but never fee'd [me], and they have no possible influence here, and are not in any society. I know all the best English already, and shall always be able to get my introductions through Sir Hamilton Seymour. I am quite certain, if permitted to practise, that I shall have the leading place; but however pleasant and agreeable, it never can be anything but a very small matter as regards income.

"This day has brought me my tenth patient, so you see I am not idling. Lord Stafford has just sent for me, and I have been told that the Prince of Hesse (Philipstad) will consult me to-morrow.

He is the brother of the Queen of England, and has great influence.

"Would you tell M'Glashan that I have got 'Rory O'More' from the author, and he shall have the review[1] for July No."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"BRUSSELS, *August* 22, 1837.

"One of our Irish residents here going over for the 'rents,' gives me the opportunity to send a few and very hurried lines to you. I have been jogging on *à l'ordinaire*, nothing new or wonderful occurring except my being fined for prescribing *sans le permis*, and my having received in reply to a memorial a most civil response from his majesty, that from the representations made to him from such high and influential quarters on my professional capabilities, every facility shall be afforded me in submitting myself to the Jury d'Exam., when my little acquaintance with the French language shall be no barrier to my undergoing the tests prescribed. So far well, and I now await for the conference which is to pronounce upon my fitness to practise.

"I have been most fortunate in all my cases, and my name is at the top of the wheel, so that if I pass this Exam., whatever success Brussels can yield I have every prospect of enjoying. Nothing but the small scale of remuneration is against the

[1] A review of 'Rory O'More' appeared in 'The Dublin University Magazine' for January 1838, but, judging it by its illiberality, I should say the review was not written by Lever.—E. D.

place being a good locality for a physician, and even already I have succeeded in getting ten francs per visit, which, if eventually adopted, would give me a very fair professional income. I am completely among the *corps diplomatique* of all nations, and through the unceasing attentions of Sir H. Seymour my position is a most gratifying one. To his house I have the *entrée* at all hours, and to his box at the opera I am at all times *admis*. We ride out with him, and pass a couple of hours every day in his society. Kate and the babes are doing well, and I am most grateful at my emancipation from [drudgery]."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, Rue Ducale, *Aug.* 29, 1837.

"Your ever warm interest for your friend is my safeguard that you will not be bored by so soon getting another letter from me; but, besides, I cannot forbear telling you that I have at last obtained the *permis* to practise, having this day passed an examination before the Medical profession who represent to the Minister the capacity of the candidate. So far, therefore, all is settled; and I hope and trust no further difficulties be in my way towards a tolerable success in Brussels. My practice lately has been less from the great emptiness of the city,—every one worth anything having fled up the Rhine, into Germany, or to Wiesbaden, Carlsbad, &c. But I am told that in the winter I shall have as much as I can attend

to. All the high are exclusively with me, and I am extending my lines among the foreign missions —Austrian, Brazilian, &c. The king has spoken most favourably about me, and I am daily expecting a call to Court. I believe I mentioned that I was fined. The penalty was remitted by his majesty; yet law expenses, fees to the Procureur du Roi, &c., make the affair amount to 500 francs (£20). This was a bore. Still, I made more than that considerably by the delinquency, so that after all I am no loser. I am dreadfully at a loss for a good groom that can ride [? postilion] occasionally (the latter is not a *sine quâ non*), who is light weight, young, not tall, and perfectly sober. I brought a good one over here,—excellent in every respect,—but the cheapness of drink has made him an inveterate drunkard, and he neglects everything. If you could send anything like this (only sober by all means), I would most willingly pay his way out here. His only [? duty] is to mind two horses and ride and drive occasionally, and that very seldom. He has no housework to do. Wages 10 guineas a-year, all livery, and about £3 more for the manure. My wife and weans are quite well, and the former delighted with Brussels. Mr Waller is a great friend of ours. We dined with him and his wife to-day, and in fact we are as intimate with all the Embassy folk as possible. I should indeed be a very discontented fellow if I was not quite satisfied with my fortune here; and now that all minor obstacles are surmounted, have really everything our own way."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *Nov.* 7, 1837.

"My practice goes on favourably, my daily receipts ranging from two to three pounds usually. . . .

"The D. U. M. people write so pressingly to me that I am once more in harness. . . . I have only my late evenings unoccupied. I find it sufficiently wearisome and fatiguing, but I am resolved to leave no shaft unworked that promises ore. . . .

"Our gay season has not yet begun. Still, we have Saturday soirees at the Embassy, to which we always go, and occasional *petits dîners* with the chiefs of the *corps diplomatique*,—very pleasant and lively."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"16 Rue Ducale, Brussels, *Nov.* 1837.

" . . . I am quite sure of Mr Butt's being a safe and punctual person, and God forgive me if I wrong Mr Crowther, but I have not the same good opinion of him. *Coûte que coûte.*

"It will not ruin me, and it's only, as Dr Bailey said, going up so many more flights of stairs to feel pulses, though here in Brussels that is rather a laborious task.

"I have been thinking very much latterly of future provision for my family, and am divided between the idea of insurance and funding, and although the former has undoubted advantages to one like myself, *ne possède pas un grand talent de l'économie*, yet depending mainly, as I must do, on

the fluctuating resources of a profession, I hesitate about commencing what I feel myself eventually unable to continue; and I think, under such circumstances, that laying by the accruing rents of the houses—and, if I can afford it now and then, an occasional £20 or £30 to make up a sum to lodge—affords, perhaps, the best means in my power to accomplish my object. In this way I might be able to put by close upon £100 per annum—at least, such is my present calculation. . . .

"The writing for the Mag. is, as you hint, a very laborious finale to a day's work; but although I find myself somewhat fagged, I feel I must do my best when the time offers, for although money comes in fast upon me, it equally rapidly takes wings to itself afterwards.

"Brussels is now beginning its gaiety, and is nearly as full as it can be. No kind of house in a good quarter, and tolerably well *garni*, can be had under £250 to £300 per annum, and many are as high as £500. Otherwise—clothes excepted—everything is cheap. We have a large Irish colony who are, I regret to say, not the *élite* of the land. . . .

"We continue to have Saturday soirees at the Embassy; and most of the best people receive company *uninvited* during each evening of the week. As to climate, the heat and cold are both greater than with you; but, thanks to foreign *liberté*, one may wear any species of clothing he deems most conducive to comfort: furs are in daily use. The ladies dress most splendidly here,—embroidered

velvets with gold and embossed satins are the only thing worn in evening costume. The opera is very good. 'The Huguenots,' lately produced, is splendid, and brings great houses.

"I have three horses—my two Irish, and a small doctor's cob I got for a debt from Lord Wm. Paget. . . . My house is most comfortably —even handsomely—furnished, as Haire will tell you, and I have only to wish for, in haberdasher phrase, 'a continuance of public favours.'

"The children are both most healthy. My boy is a very stout fellow, and I think prettier than his sister. I sent a silhouette of them to the Bakers a few days since. I hope you may see Haire—he is a really kind fellow, and I know you will like him. He saw a good deal of what was going on here in his short stay, and can tell you *ma position actuelle* better than anything I can write.

"Among *bien distingués* here we have the son of Tippo Saib. He speaks English fluently, and in his oriental costume forms a grand lion for our soirees.

"You can form some idea of the extent of the English colony here, on hearing that we have two churches at which service is performed twice on Sundays to large congregations, and that two English newspapers are edited and published here, —they contain copious extracts of every political change going on in England.

"You have heard, I suppose, of the great gossip

of the day—Lady Lincoln's affair with her doctors. The real case appears to be a most infamous one,—nothing less than this: these two Polish M.D.'s here have threatened, unless they receive 400,000 francs, to disclose certain secrets her ladyship unfortunately let slip in the ravings of her insanity during her illness. Lord Lincoln resents the iniquitous demand, and the affair is to come before Le Tribunal. Anything so thoroughly blackguard I never heard of before. But [it is] a salutary lesson to the English for their mad preference of foreign [? quacks] and humbugs to the highly-educated medical men of Ireland and England. . . .

"I don't know if I told you that I have been appointed Medical Examiner to the United Kingdom London Assurance Co., and have daily proofs of its value. . . .

"I received a very wicked and flattering letter from Spencer Knox, the son of the late Bishop of Derry, who had heard of me from Lord Westminster's missing patient. . . .

"If, instead of starving upon dispensaries in Ireland, a few of the best young medicals would only learn French, there are some capital openings here. At Bruges, at the moment,—one of the cheapest places on the Continent,—from £400 to £500 per annum could be made by a properly qualified man,—and no one offers. I have been sent for thirty miles (to Ghent), and there is in that city a large English residency *sans médecin.*"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Rue Ducale, Brussels, *Dec.* 29, 1837.

"My practice here still continues to increase, though now I must not look to much extension to come. I can live, if this last, by my trade.

"I did not send any MS. to [D. U. M.] for January, for I was greatly overworked, but will despatch an article on Tuesday the 9th in time to appear next month (Feb.) Pray say so (to Butt). I shall endeavour to make it a sheet. . . .

"The gaiety of this place has begun, and balls and soirees are given every night. I am hoping to be presented at Court next week, but a difficulty lies in the way—my never having been at St James's. This may be, I trust, got over, for being presented would be of service to me. . . .

"The standing army here, with a population of only 4,000,000, is nearly 100,000 men, fully equipped in every respect. What would Mr Hume say to this?

"The people themselves are universally well disposed—obeying the law, and most industrious in their habits. Crime is but little known, and capital offences almost never occur. Through the streets of the large capital at night any one may walk, not only safe from personal risk, but even from the least insult. An improper expression I never heard yet, though [abroad] at all hours, and yet there is neither a watchman nor night *gens d'arme* in the whole city. And, strange as it may seem, though a bottle of

Geneva costs but about 7d., drunkenness is rare except amongst the English servants, who are the greatest wretches unhanged. The theatres are three—the Opera, the [? Vaudeville], and a species of circus like Astley's. All are good of their kind, and always crowded. The weather here is beautiful—more like spring than winter, but I believe it is unusually mild for the climate.

"An American Minister and Swedish have both arrived since I have been here. All, so far as I can see, promises the stability of the present state of things. The country possesses enormous resources, and notwithstanding the late revolution—always an expensive luxury—the debt is but trifling. Railroads are being constructed with great rapidity between the large towns which, from the flat surface of the country and its immense productiveness, must be in every instance profitable speculations. As to Society: it ranks higher than any other capital on the Continent except Paris, being crowded with persons of independent fortune, who are most hospitably disposed. The king himself does everything possible to make his Court agreeable. . . . A great many thanks for 'The Evening Mail.' The puffs always make me go on when the stimulus of money fails."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *Feb.* 1838.

"Although Brussels fulfils all my expectations, I might be ultimately tempted to try my luck

in London or Paris [as a medical man]. . . . Attending to an outbreak of measles has prevented me from sending my usual contribution to the Mag. . . . I have definitely raised my fees from 5 francs to 10 francs—double that of any other English physician, and five times the fee of the Belgian practitioner. . . . The sister of the Ambassador has recovered under my hands from what was universally believed to be a fatal case of spasmodic croup. . . . There is nothing but gaiety and going out here every night, and I am half wishing for summer to have a little rest and quietness."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, Rue Ducale, *March* 28, 1838.

"I may be in London in the summer to be presented. Which I must do as a preliminary to being introduced to the Court here. . . .

"I am carrying ahead with a very strong hand, and have little dances weekly. I had three earls and two ambassadors on Tuesday, and am keeping that set exclusively in my interest."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *July* 13, 1838.

"The excessive heat (102 in the shade) has been such that I have been obliged to send my children to the country about nine miles off—a pretty village between Waterloo and [ ]. Kate and I are going to-morrow on a little tour along the Meuse by Namur (shades of my Uncle

Toby!), and shall be away for about a fortnight. . . . I drive my own horses, and merely bring Kate and a groom."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Boulevarde de l'Observation, Brussels,
Sept. 13, 1838.

"I have been obliged to change my residence, very much in some respects to my disadvantage, inasmuch as my present one is *vis-à-vis* to the Embassy, and consequently inviting a daily, almost hourly, intercourse there, besides giving me a kind of publicity. My new residence is No. 33 Boulevarde de l'Observation, a very good house—four rooms on each floor, with garden, coach-house, and five-stalled stable. It has been the residence of the Portuguese Ambassador up to this time, and is in perfect repair. . . . Mr Dumont, the Irish Under Secretary, has been a patient of mine for some time past. We are great friends. He has dined here several times with me, and if anything medical official is in the new Poor-Law Bill, I think I should have an offer of it at least."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"33 Boulevard de l'Observation,
Nov. 12, 1838.

"The fatal facility of the Embassy bag for troubling one's friends—as you have cause to feel—induces me to bore you with a commission, the

performance of which I cannot spare you, for I have no other friend to whom I can commit myself *et mes affaires* at this juncture.

"I have just received a letter from Mortimer O'Sullivan, to whose management I had entrusted an arrangement with M'Glashan concerning the sale of a republished edition of 'Harry Lorrequer,' and who from unavoidable absence is compelled to leave the negotiation on your shoulders. . . .

"M'Glashan proposes (O'S. writes to me) to publish H. L. in monthly numbers, with illustrations like the 'Pickwick,' in preference to a 2-vol. form; in which I thoroughly coincide. He also desires to have an answer from me as to my plan regarding the length of the work and my expectations as to payment. To which I reply that I am willing to give twelve monthly numbers of the size of 'Pickwick' (*i.e.*, two sheets each), those already in the D. U. M. going as far as the Mag. (for £150), and thus concluding the work in these twelve numbers.

"I suppose, from a rough calculation, that one sheet and a half of magazine-matter will equal two sheets of octavo like Pickwick; but at all events I shall be prepared to fulfil my intended extent, no matter how far short they may come.

"O'Sullivan proposed to M'Glashan the common bargain of 'half-profits and security against loss,' to which M'G. replied that he would accede, but proposed a purchase. *So do I.* Therefore it is a mere question of money between us.

"It is right I should mention that the copyright

is with me by express agreement, so that no question of the Magazine interest exists.

"Now I should spare you all this but that if I propose at once to M'Glashan, and he objects, the scheme ends, whereas I leave it to you to make the best bargain you can, coming even as low as £100 if necessary,—not lower, because I have reason to know that the thing is wished for by him and expected to do well. Butt has confessed fully as much already in his letters. If he is willing to give £100 I should be very glad to leave the remaining £50 dependent upon the sale,—a very frequent bargain—*i.e.*, if the work succeed the £50 is paid, otherwise not.

"I shall also *not* give the concluding Nos. in the Magazine, thereby reserving all interest in the conclusion for the new publication. This only, however, if it appears proper so to do to the proprietors of the Magazine, who, having paid me liberally, shall be dealt liberally with by me.

"For all the details of the publication regarding correcting for press, &c., I have peculiar facilities of transmission through the Irish office which will save heavy postage to both parties. This is of consequence, as I must correct the press myself. This I should insist upon. I can be ready for the first No. for January, but as illustrations will take time, February would be soon enough to begin—and it is a better publishing month. This I leave to M'Glashan.

"I shall not send anything further to the Magazine until I receive a reply, and have only to add

that I hope you may succeed in making some bargain for me, for I want money most considerably. If you can hasten the arrangement, *tant mieux*, for I must remain idle till I hear from you.

. . . . . .

"Lord Douro, who has been breakfasting here the last two mornings, has promised me a frank, but I am afraid to delay in sending you this in the hope of seeing him.

. . . . . .

"I have only to [? warn] you, as a last instruction, that M'G. is a devil of a screw, and will fight to the last for low terms. Therefore be prepared to threaten him with Bentley, Saunders, and Ottley, &c. For I know he wishes the thing, and will not easily relinquish it.

"The local Irish papers have called out for a republication, and that may also be urged with him. These are my last words—and God bless you and yours!"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"33 Boulevard de l'Observation,
Dec. 1838.

"I have just despatched my acceptance of M'Glashan's offer—which I am well content with—and shall lose no time in setting about *my* part in the affair. I hope to be ready for March next. I do not know if any more formal document of agreement be requisite between us than his proposal and my consent as expressed by letter. But as publishers are rather slippery gentlemen, [I] think

it would be safer to have a regularly-drawn contract on each side for signature. This I know to be the usual mode, for I have seen such issuing from Bentley and the other great publishing people.

"I am very desirous that the illustrations should be by Cruikshank, not Phiz. Pray try to accomplish this for me. Much if not all the success to be hoped for depends on these [illustrations]. . . .

"M'Glashan speaks of an introductory chapter. I think that anything of this sort had better be deferred for the last No., as in the 'Pickwick'; but on this point I shall be guided by him.

"M'G. desires that each No. should be, as it were, complete in itself. Now until I know the quantity of matter requisite for one I cannot effect this. Therefore let him as soon as possible have a hundred struck off for me, and this will be a guide for the others. Of course M'G. considers as his exclusive province all the details of getting up the work, but I hope he intends putting me in a good coat, as I promise myself, if fortunate, another appearance on the boards.

"I wish above all that he could put me in relations with the illustrator for the scenes to be selected as subjects: this is most material. John [or Johnston] speaks most kindly upon the propriety of not touching the proceeds of this affair. I shall do my endeavours thereunto, but for the present I am rather lower in funds than usual. My furnishing has cost more than double what I anticipated, and I must call upon you in January some time to send me £40 or £50. Butt owes me

something—I believe about £20—for the Mag. The exact sum I know not, but he can tell you; and the affair had better be wound up, as he has left the concern and gone to the English Bar, where, by the bye, the highest expectations are formed of him.

"We have been giving weekly soirees to the great guns here—all the different *corps diplomatique* and lords and marquises without end. I have a very handsome house, and the [? entertaining] has been done admirably well. Johnston was here one night. The thing is cheaply done here,—a well-lit room, plenty of servants (to be had for the night), ices, lemonade glacé, and stirrup-cup of spiced wine at 12 o'clock,—and that completes the expenditure. And you can have fifty people—and we never had less—for about five pounds sterling. They all so understand the art of mere chatting that music and dancing would be thought a regular bore; and except one whist-table for the dowager ladies of honour, nothing else is needed. Without witnessing it one cannot think how well these affairs always go off, and the din and clamour of fifty people, talking in about half the tongues of Europe, is about as exciting a scene in a brilliant salon as can be conceived. Lord Ely and Lord James Hay and Lord Douro are here every Monday; and amongst our notorieties we have Napoleon, Bassano of Russian memory, the Russian Ambassador, the Man of the Treaty of Tilsit, and Jerome Buonaparte. Sir H[amilton] Seymour and our Embassy never fail us, and we are really at

the top of the ladder. I confess I am proud of this for one reason: hitherto the doctor has been regularly kept down amongst English society in Brussels, and it took a good deal of management to break the old chain of habit and fight out a place for him.

"If our Lorrequer scheme goes on favourably I hope to visit Ireland in the summer for a day or two.

"As time presses for our publishing, pray write as soon as you can and tell me all you can learn about M'Glashan's views. Since I have begun this, the news—alas! but too true—has reached me of the failure of La Banque de Belgique. All my ready money happens to be in their notes; about £40 is thus, if not entirely lost, at least so far jeopardised as to be trembled for."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"33 Boulevard de l'Observation,
Jan. 4, 1839.

"How many plates do you propose giving to each No.? If possible, say three.

"Let me also hear what dress we are to appear in. There is a great deal in the externals of a book as well as of a gentleman."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Jan.* 11, 1839.

"H. K. Brown has not yet written to me, and I regret it the more, because if I knew the scenes he selected, I might have benefited by his ideas

and rendered them more graphic, as an author corrects his play by seeing a dress rehearsal.

. . . . . .

"Has Phiz any notion of Irish physiognomy? for this is most important. If not, and as 'Lorrequer' abounds in specimens, pray entreat him to study the Tail[1] when they meet in February: he can have nothing better, if not too coarse for his purpose. Don't fear for the conclusion. I think I can manage it safely; and if the company would like to sup where they have dined, I shall keep a broil for their amusement. My intention is, if all prospers, to bring 'Harry' to Canada in the next series, and as I have been there, something can be made of it. This is, however, for after consideration.

"I have been so hard worked here that I have been obliged to sit up at night to transcribe, and 'Harry Lorrequer' has kept me from dinners and evening-parties innumerable.

"How will the press treat us? Conciliate by every means the editors. Upon my conscience, I think I should have a *soirée* of devils, if I was among you, to stand well with the men of ink. Write to me soon. Your suggestions are most useful, and keep up my pluck and stimulate my activity.

"The illustrations in No. 1 are very good, but why is Lorrequer at the supper at Father Malachy's made so like Nicholas Nickleby? That is unfortunate, and every one sees it at a glance.

[1] This was an epithet applied to the "Repealers," who followed O'Connell's leadership.—E. D.

All plagiarisms in the book, I beg to say, are my prerogatives."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"BRUSSELS, *Jan.* 1839.

". . . In addition to the English leaving this and leaving me without occupation, I should lose my little property of chattels that I have gathered about me. . . .

"The next few days may see me on the road: if so, I know not which water I shall ask my passport for.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"BRUSSELS, *Feb.* 12, 1839.

"Matters look somewhat better here the last few days, but still the massing of troops continues, and already about 100,000 men and a large artillery force are assembled upon the Holland-Belgium frontier. The treaty, though signed by the King of Holland, has not been acceded to by the Belgians, and while the present excitement continues it is not probable that anything decisive will be done by the Chambers. In fact, so strong is the antipathy to the Dutch and so great the influence of the priests, that a war would be universally popular among the mass of the people; and the anti-war party in the Chamber are consequently fearful of expressing their opinions, well knowing that, let matters go how they will, they at least are very likely to be pillaged by the mob.

"The last move of the Government here is certainly, to say the least, a suspicious one. General Skrzynecki, the Pole who commanded at Ostrolenka, has been appointed a general in the Belgian service. The circumstances are worth mention. This Pole, it appears, when the defeat of his countrymen took place, fled with a very considerable force and took refuge in a portion of Poland under the Austrian rule, into which the Russians, who are no respecters of etiquette, would have followed had not Austria and Prussia at once interfered and guaranteed to Russia that *they* would be responsible for him and his officers never entering a foreign service, nor in any wise 'troubling the peace of Europe.' Skrzynecki consequently obtained his freedom and retired to Prague (in the Austrian territory), where he has since lived on his parole. Now comes the worst of the story. Leopold and his agents have induced him to break faith, and come here at this moment to take command, for which he has talents, and his reputed bigotry as a Catholic renders him very suitable,—and the result is that the Ministers of Austria and Prussia have both demanded their passports and left Brussels. This tells very ill for Leopold, who at the best shows himself the mere tool of the Catholic party who have taken this man up. The Chamber has been prorogued till the 4th March, but I know from private sources that it is the king's intention to convoke them in the coming week, and, if possible, carry the acceptance of the Twenty-four Articles.

If he fail, I then suppose we may have a renewed negotiation, but as there is no prospect of them getting more favourable terms, they must either accede at last or try the chances of a war, which cannot fail, once begun, to become a European one. . . .

"Tom Steele is now here offering his services and 10,000 wild Irish to the Belgian Government in case of war. However, I think we may have no need for either. . . .

"A French army of 48,000 men are now on our frontier, and a very large force of Prussians, with 10,000 troops from the German confederates, occupy the others. These, with an English fleet ready to set sail for the Scheldt, are the means in store for us—if the treaty be rejected."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"Brussels, *Feb.* 16, 1839.

"As I have received no account of the former MSS., I have worked night and day to complete this in the prospect that, if you like it, it can be published by the 15th January [? February]. I have, I believe, improved upon the finale; I think that now the ending is as good as I could make it. How the original MS.[1] went astray I cannot ascertain, and it is now needless to inquire; but as I myself saw it put in the Embassy's bag, and know that it must have arrived at the P.O., I cannot conceive what subsequently became of it. Holdswith is so infernally stupid that, however

[1] Some chapters of 'Harry Lorrequer.'

blameless he may be, I curse him in my own mind for the misfortune, particularly as once before it was through him a nearly similar mischance occurred. The scenes for illustration are not so good, of course, in the concluding No. The best, however, are the whist-party with the king, and O'Leary in prison.

"I have already explained about the portrait, which was a total failure. Phiz must invent a vignette for the title. I have sat up nearly till morning the last fortnight, and am quite worn out. The chaps. are, however, with a few exceptions, written *de novo*, as my memory completely failed me as to the former ones; but I have read both to the same parties, who concur in preferring the latter. As I shall feel most nervous about the safe arrival of this after my late misfortune, let me hear when it reaches Dublin."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Boulevard de l'Observation,
March 1, 1839.

"The king has become very unpopular: his busts are pulled down or broken in various places through the country, and many former adherents of the Government speak openly that they would prefer a thousand times to become a province of Spain rather than be a disunited country, as the loss of Limburg and Luxemburg would make them. . . . Banks are breaking on every side—two at Louvain, one at Antwerp, and one at Liége within the last week, — and Cockerill, an English manufacturer,

whose wages to workmen alone amounted to a thousand a-week, is declared bankrupt. . . .

"I saw a private letter from Lord Melbourne to-day, saying that they had got 'a famous Lord-Lieutenant for Ireland.' . . .

"I am very anxious about 'Lorrequer,' for, unfortunately, like most — I might say all — my resources, they are always digested before being swallowed, and the possibility of any trick [on the part of M'Glashan]—a possibility of which I cannot entirely divest my mind—has harassed me much of late."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *March* 29, 1839.

". . . I have been, and am, but very so-so in health latterly. My old enemy, my liver—who has most vulgar prejudices against 'good cookery' and French wines—has expressed his discontent most palpably. If I could spare time for a trip over the water the sea would, I think, set all right.

"This place has received a great blow from the late troubles, and, *entre nous,* I should at once take wing for Paris if I had £500 *en poche,* but as I haven't as many francs, *il faut que j'y reste encore.*"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Boulevard de l'Observation,
April 1839.

"I fear if my letters to you were to rise up in evidence against me, that my cry, like that of

the horse-leech, would be found to be one 'Give! Give!'

"But true it most certainly is my poverty, not my will, consents. The war, the weather, and the taste for Italy (confound these classical publications!) have all conspired to take our English population [away from] here latterly, and I find myself, like the Bank de Belgique, *presque en état de faillite.* Therefore send me the £26 you have; and if Butt has anything due—which I believe and hope he has,—send that also. I shall try if some of the London magazines will not accept contributions from me,—as my 'Lorrequer' repute is a little in my favour, now is the time; but for some days past I have been poorly,—my ancient enemy, the liver—who has certain vulgar antipathies to *dindes aux truffes* and iced champagne—has again been threatening me, and I am obliged to do very little.

"The letter you enclosed me from [ ] was so singular, I am sorry you did not read it. It appears that about four years ago some person gave Mr S. the words and music of 'The Pope' as his own, which has since gone through several editions and turned out a safe speculation. Mr S. at length learns that I am the real Simon Pure, and with great honesty and no less courtesy writes me a very handsome—indeed I should not be astray if I said gentlemanlike—letter apologising for his usurpation of my property, and requesting of me to point out any charity to which I would desire a donation to be sent, and that he will do it at

once. Kate has just seen a paragraph in 'The Mail' which you sent, that offers a good occasion for doing a service, and I think I may as well not let slip the opportunity. With this intent I have written a letter to Mr S., which I leave open for you to read, and, if you approve, forward it to him, pointing out the destination, and leaving the sum of his contribution to himself. If you could conveniently see Mr S. it will be gratifying to me to know how he behaves, for I confess the affair has interested me a good deal; and finally, if the contribution be sent, I should like it to go to [ ] of Sandford Chapel. I have begun a new series in the Mag.,[1] and have a more lengthy and weightier speculation on the stocks.[2]

"I believe M'Glashan will write soon, but in any case let me hear by the 26th (pay-day for my rent). Of course you don't think of paying for 'Lorrequer,' and pray row Curry if your copy is not always an early one. Tell me what you think of the illustrations. I am much pleased with them."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"BRUSSELS, *May* 3, 1839.

"I have not been so well latterly, and am trying to get some one to order me to travel a little. As old Lady B——e always found a doctor who 'knew her constitution,' and told her to take 'Curaçoa' frequently, I hope to find an intelligent physician too. I have so much material in my head, which

[1] "Continental Gossipings." [2] 'Charles O'Malley.'

would work up advantageously in our Gossipings,—sketches of places, society stories, with some hints upon the Continent that only a residence suggests,—that I have some idea of giving them a much wider range, taking in literature, politics, manners, habits, &c., &c., mingled with sufficient incident and story, all thrown into a somewhat narrative form, and making a book of it. Mortimer O'Sullivan, to whom I mentioned this, if near you, will explain my plan, which he approved—perhaps I should say suggested—when here. I should give every city, most of the travelled routes, and some untravelled ones, sketches of the German universities, songs, &c.; and in fine, make up a slap-dash ramble abroad that would astonish better-behaved and more sedate travellers, keeping our original title; and with the aid of Phiz, who should not want scenes for illustration, I think the thing would do. Of course, it should appear in 1- or 2-vol. form, and if you like may come forth in the Mag. each month. Answer me on this head soon, for if you like it I think I will go to Germany, visit the Spas, and try if we cannot beat that most insufferable humbug and bore, old Grenville. If 'Harry Lorrequer' succeed, a new work by the author, as the newspapers have it, should take the tide of public favour at the flood.

"My trip to Ireland is so very contingent upon the people who won't be sick at present, but are keeping it all for July and August, that I should like to hear from you more fully."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*May* 7, 1839.

"I have had, since I wrote, an offer, unsolicited on my part, made to me to complete Grenville's books by a vol. upon the Spas of Belgium and the North of Germany."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"Brussels, *May* 1839.

"I send you a short chapter of 'Continental Gossipings.'

"For the great abruptness of its transitions I shall apologise to you, though not to the public, by mentioning that here the choice of topics is extended, and the opportunity for variety increased; as in a *table d'hôte* dinner where there are fifty dishes, it is hard if you could not have something to your taste. And to follow up the illustration, if you object to the order of their service, I reply that I have lived long enough in Germany to be quite content at finding puddings precede soups and fish come after cheese. Therefore, you see, I am above or (if you prefer it) beneath criticism.

"'The Morning Post' has not said anything as yet. Remind Johnson on this head for me. 'The Morning Post' is a tower of strength, and we must contrive to have it with us. I have been so out of health that I can do but little, and have some thoughts of going over to London for the sake of the voyage, and to get presented, in which case I shall have an opportunity of going across and seeing you all in the 'sweetest city upon the Say.' Tell

me, too, is the story of the Dutch Minister, who was humbugged by false despatches last summer in Paris, known in Ireland? If not, it is too good to lose, and will be *bon* for our 'Continental Gossipings.' This place abounds in munition for the press; but I am so circumstanced I cannot take advantage of it. One week of 'Confessions' for Brussels would, however, be worth all Master Harry's, if he went on for a century.

"The treaty has been peaceably accepted here, and no political excitement of any kind has followed: disturbances are, however, to be feared if anything should occur in France; and it is said, upon good authority, that in such an event Leopold would abdicate. I believe with all my soul he is perfectly sick of the whole concern.

"The French is terribly mangled in 'Lorrequer.' Pray have this amended."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"Brussels, *May* 28, 1839.

"Had it not been for your urgent desire upon the subject, the German tour had been long since abandoned by me. The difficulties which I encountered in merely thinking over the plans were such as nearly floored the undertaking, However, after burning four attempts, I send you a few pages of my fifth and last essay, which, if you like, I shall continue. What I claim for myself is simply this, to praise or abuse to the top of my Irish bent everything which comes across me. I don't care for the *incognito* further than serves to support the spirit of the thing, but, of course, purport-

ing to be the production of a German, it had better be preserved. 'Gossips from Abroad' I think of calling the great unborn. My plan is a tour beginning at Rotterdam, sketching life, manners, &c., as we go on, telling stories, describing places, &c.; up the Rhine to Baden, into Germany, the German cities, spas, universities, the Danube, Saxony, Switzerland, Tyrol, France, Paris, Belgium, and Loire,—in two goodly vols., like 'Lady Chatterton' as to size. I could give the more touchy bits for the Mag. *de temps en temps*, and reserve the whole for publication early in the coming year. I have already some of my best material almost ready. So pray write me your views anent this. But pray write soon. My impatience for answers to my letters bodes but ill to your future welfare, if certain *blessings* invoked by me are to have any chance of accomplishment. My trip to Dublin is not out of the question, but act as if it were, and let me hear from you. I cannot work with spirit or industry till all the detail of arrangement is got done with; and now that my busiest doctoring season is over, I should like to set to work with energy. Your idea of the woodcuts in the page is quite perfect, and I like it amazingly. A boar's head, a Swiss châlet, and Tyrol pass: a Danube skiff would take well and ornament the book."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"Brussels, *June* 4, 1839.

"I have so many things to say to you that I treasure them all up for the visit which I have promised myself to Ireland, but which I daily fear

can scarcely take place. This is a season in which so many notorieties come through that I have dreaded being away. Polignac, Peel, Lords Brougham and Lyndhurst, the Bishop of Exeter, and several others have come under my hands since last summer, and I cannot with safety or prudence lose the opportunity of making such acquaintances. However, if it be manageable I must do it, for I wish very much to talk over and discuss several plans and projects I have been thinking over. Since I sent off my last MSS. to you a week ago, I have written nothing but recipes of blue pill and senna draughts. . . .

"I have had some very ludicrous mention made to me by a doctor of a certain new publication called 'Harry Lorreker,' of which I was, of course, profoundly ignorant, and even in one case borrowed the book. As all the criticisms were not *couleur de rose*, the fun was the greater, as no one saw my blushes, or at least suspected them.

"Once more let me have an early letter. You spoke of going somewhere for health. A few weeks up the Rhine would do you infinite service. Come over to me and I'll patch you up and give you a route—perhaps go along with you."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"Brussels, *July* 1839.

"I now send you the review of Marryat. Let me see a proof if possible. I have done my best to let the Yankees down easy, but I fear it is too bitter. If there be anything amusing for review send it

to me,—anything to abuse, anything to tear. I have no temper or spirit just now for encomiums.

"Write to me a long letter, and if there be anything encouraging in the notices, tell me. You know the story of the handsome Frenchwoman to whom Chateaubriand complained that, though ever so clever, flattery of her was too difficult; to which she replied, 'N'importe: louez-moi toujours.' So I, without any of the same reason for the practice, would beg of you: Give me sugar-plums, if there be any, for I never felt more in want of a little 'buttering-up,' as Mr Daly would call it. Of course, I should recommend both as regards you and myself if the thing was done well—'Let not the badness of the cheese obliterate the remembrance of the soup and fish.' So say I. If the public laugh at first, let us not send them home disposed to cry."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Aug.* 2, 1839.

"Acting on the opinion contained in your first letter that the matter then published would make eight numbers, I promised four additional ones. Since then I have written one and a half of the new monthly numbers, and find that the whole only makes eight in all, which is a terrible overthrow of all my plans regarding it. The material I have still by me will not by any arrangement extend to more than two numbers. I fear to prolong it beyond that would greatly injure the book as a whole and weaken any interest it may have excited, by

what would be called a falling-off. I cannot say how much this has vexed and annoyed me. But I am disposed to doing the best under the circumstances. First, I shall conclude the affair in ten numbers, making you any compensation for the omitted two you think fair, either in money or in any future dealing; secondly, I will write the two additional numbers as well as I can, which will, however, involve a change of plot, &c., &c., that I cannot but deprecate as regards the fortune of the book as a whole."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Aug.* 6, 1839.

"The more I think of it, the more I feel persuaded that we had better close ['Lorrequer'] with ten numbers. The plot will be original, the effect not weakened, the volume sufficiently large, and the public less disposed to grumble, which, for all our sakes, is something. I have had so much worry here with sick brats and patients of all kinds, that I am fairly knocked up. Besides that, there is not an old fool sent by that arch-charlatan Grenville to drink Spa waters in Germany, who does not expect me to have an analysis of every dirty spring or fetid puddle from Pyrmont to the Pyrenees; and my whole mornings are passed discussing chalybeates and sulphurets with all the scarlet and pimpled faces that Harrogate and Buxton have turned off incurable. There is only one comfort in all this. However imaginary the ills they suffer

on leaving England, by the time they reach Brussels on their way back, few of them boast constitutions strong enough not to be suffering from the fat, grease, filth, and acidity of German cookery, and they all, more or less, are in need of me before they get their passports from Antwerp. The English who travel — God bless them! — are an amiable class, and they seldom fail to bring along with them for the journey some family ailment which French wines and high living combine to make troublesome. A constant influx of these pleasant people keeps me here, but if I can manage it I mean to bolt soon. Every *table d'hôte* in this city swarms with the most unlicked cubs of our country, speaking neither German nor French — a few English. They disgust me for the false impression they convey to foreigners of what English gentlemen really are. What they come for, and where they go, I cannot say. It is impossible that they can be escaping for debt, for no one could possibly trust them; and they cannot be swindlers, for swindlers are men of captivating address and prepossessing manners. I rejoice to think that they are poisoned by the living, sent wrong in diligences, cheated by the money-changers, and bullied by the police."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"Brussels, *Aug.* 30, 1839.

"Your letter of the 24th has arrived, together with the packet containing the review of Marryat,

dated 8th ult., since which date it has been following his Excellency the Ambassador through the Highlands, and enjoying the sports of the season at the Duke of Athol's.

"I have just arranged about the portrait.[1] You shall have the sketch next week, and had better get it engraved. He will be much more Harry Lorrequer than Charles Lever. However, that will be all the better.

"I have not the most remote idea of the conclusion, and have lately been adding more to my family than to 'Harry,'—a little annual in the shape of a daughter being presented to me yesterday. Would you kindly put the announcement for me in the Irish papers?—'Born on the 28th of the month, at Brussels,' &c. Of my new and most original work, more hereafter. Meanwhile, see if Butt does not owe something for my contributions to Mag., and if so, send it, and anything for my late MSS., to Spencer, who asks for money in lieu of sending it,—a species of transfusion of my pecuniary blood which my constitution cannot bear. I have just been walked into here by a swindler to the amount of £145—money borrowed on security. This is a confoundedly heavy loss, and has ruffled my temper, and possibly affected my naturally legible handwriting.

"I have some very brilliant ideas of my new book, which you shall soon hear of.

"Send me something light to review."

[1] This was not the portrait prefixed to 'Jack Hinton,' but a vignette finally condemned.—E. D.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"BRUSSELS, *Sept.* 13, 1839.

"Since my return I have been working very hard — not medically, for town is empty, but scribbling. . . .

"I am in great hopes to have something like a half medical tome on the stocks for spring. I was talking about it to Bradie and Chambers in London, and they strongly advised it — for money's sake less than the popularity such things secure."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Sept.* 20, 1839.

"I sent you a week since two chaps.—xliii. and xliv.—of 'Harry Lorrequer.' God grant they have reached you, for I never can rewrite, and if lost, they break the chains, if there be any, in the narrative. I am told of a handsome notice of 'Harry' in the 'Naval and Military Gazette.' Look at it. How goes on the sale of No. 7? Tell me, and let me have a proof of No. 9 soon, and as much of No. 10 as you can get together. I see my way thus much more clearly. I wish you would suggest scenes to Browne; his choice latterly is not over happy. But above all, my wife and daughters are still poorly, and I am so unhinged and upset by these causes and not being well myself, that I am below the mark as regards writing. I trust, however, that this is not to continue, and look forward to being once more *en route*."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Oct.* 7 [? 1839].

"Your letter came to hand exactly as I had despatched my own lament for the lost 'Lorrequer,' and had actually set about writing another conclusion for No. 9, which I have since, of course, burnt,—not but I have some misgivings that it was the best of the two. We must soon pull up, and marry our man. I'll do for you a review of the son's 'Life of Grattan,' but it must be a profound secret. I think Lorrequer's portrait, if done at all, had better be appended as a vignette to the book,—mounted on the cob, as I mentioned. How to manage it is, however, difficult. A German translation of 'Harry' is announced in the Leipzig catalogue. It must have been *raythe*r thorny work for the translator. Meanwhile—proof! proof! and a long letter, I beseech of you. I am idle, and likely to be so, if not stimulated by hearing from you. It is only the occasional prod of the spur that even makes me move."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Oct.* 18, 1839.

"In the hope of forcing you to reply, I have been pouring in a shower of small shot these last three or four days, and I now send another missile in the shape of a new chapter of 'Harry.' For Heaven's sake write to me, and let me see the proof of No 10, for in about ten days my season commences here, and then blue pills and

rhubarb will eject all that appertains to our friend Hal."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Oct.* 22, 1839.

"Herewith goes a slating of 'Physic and Physicians' for our December number, of which let me have a proof—that is, if ever you intend writing to me again.

"Write soon—write soon.

"What would you think of a book called 'The Irish, by Themselves'? Something like 'Les Français' —to be done by several hands,—Otway, Carleton, &c.? Of all countries it presents most facility for this kind of thing, and might 'take' prodigiously."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"Brussels, *Nov.* 1, 1839.

"I have thought so much over the idea of 'The Irish' that I send you a list of subjects conveying my idea of the thing which would, I am sure, beat 'Lorrequer' to sticks. Could I talk the matter over with you I could better explain my thoughts, but 'The French' will sufficiently convey the shape, style, and intention of the publication. Write me your full opinion on this matter, but do not mention it except to some well-judging friend till we think more about it. The illustrations should be of the most graphic kind, and the descriptive part as narrative and touchy as possible. I am so full of it that I can think of nothing else.

"List of subjects for 'The Irish, Painted by Themselves': The Irish Artist (only think of Sharpe!), The Country Dancing Master, The Medical Student, The Irish Fellow, T.C.D., The Irish Widow, The Irish Author, The Common Council Man, The Auctioneer, The Irish Beggar, The Irish Lawyer, The Priest, The Boarding-House Keeper, The Hedge Schoolmaster, The Doctor, The Sporting Gentleman, Country Attorney, Popular Preacher, The Hackney-car Man, The Dublin Dandy, The Favourite Actor, The Dublin Belle."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Nov.* 12, 1839.

"I sincerely hope that long ere this your withers have been unwrung, and that my friend, Dr Graves, has restored you to the rank of a biped. God forgive you! what a dreadful thing it might have been to die with such a sin on your soul, for sending me the two last proofs. When did you hear that I was reading Job? They are, indeed, awful: the No. 9 has several blunders, and I am resolved to make the public look to you and yours for them in the preface. See to No. 10 with all the accuracy possible, for in the Mag. it is perfectly unintelligible. (Colonel) Addison has reviewed that splendid book 'Africa,' and you can insert it as a notice. You ask for No. 11. But No. 11 is not begun!! Nor how it is to be do I yet know. The whole is to be dedicated to His Excellency, Sir H. Seymour, Minister Plenipotentiary, &c. I have been, for

domestic causes, unable to write or read, and scarcely had any time to eat these ten days. Now, however,——

"Don't refer to me as the writer except among your friends."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"Brussels, *Nov.* 1839.

"My intention as regards my new book is to continue 'A Tour on the Continent' with articles originally written in the D. L. G., entitled 'The Log-Book of a Rambler,' taking the Rhine for a starting-point, thence diverging to the fashionable watering-places into Germany, the universities, galleries, &c., giving sketchy and anecdotic descriptions of new places and things as I pass; thence to Dresden, Vienna, Prague, Munich, Paris, Brussels, &c., illustrating each trait of foreign manner by an essay or tale as it strikes me, all as much in the slap-dash style of 'Lorrequer' as to bear his name, and be called, if you approve of it, 'Harry Lorrequer's Log; or, A Six Months' Leave.' This I intend to be my *grand ouvrage*, and esteem it a dead bargain at £300, which you must give me first. I purpose that you will not be a loser by me, and will make it all that my poor talents can do. In this proposal I hesitate not to say that I am certain that I am not overrating what I can fairly look for. I am very much fatigued and overworked just now, and being pressed besides, can only add that I am ever yours truly."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Nov.* 29, 1839.

"Since I last wrote I have had four applications from Bentley, Colburn, Lardner, &c., to write something in the style of 'Harry Lorrequer,' but longer and more pathetic. They order a book, as they would their breeches. This speaks well for the success of 'Lorrequer.' I wonder that any of these great men knew the whereabouts of so humble a man as Charles Lever."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *Nov.* 29, 1839.

"I write in great haste to ask of you to explain away a blunder I have just been guilty of. I have received an offer from Bentley to write a new work to be called 'The Irish Dragoon,' in the 'Lorrequer' *façon*. The plan appeared to me, the more I reflected upon it, one promising success, and I this morning wrote to M'Glashan explaining how I stood, and told him that for auld langsyne, &c., I wished he might be the publisher if the thing was likely to be profitable,—mentioning that about £40 per No. of the 'Lorrequer' size would be 'the chalk.' Now I made a miscalculation, for I find that Bentley's terms would be equal to £50 a No.; and although I should like to do the civil thing by M'G., yet I am too poor a man to do it at this price. Tell him all this, and say besides that I by no means put it upon him to deal at all—that I merely would say this:

You know how 'Lorrequer' has or has not told with the public—your present experience enables you to say whether you can, with a reasonable chance of sufficient profit give this sum or not—and your answer can be yea or nay at once. My wish is—consistently with what I owe to me and mine—to serve him."

To Mr James M'Glashan.

"*Dec.* 11, 1839.

"Without wasting either your time or my own by expressing surprise at the tone of your last letter, I shall as clearly as possible reply to its contents. First—I sent from this, four days previous to the despatch of the preface and dedication of 'Lorrequer,' the whole of No. 11, minus such pages as I intended to add to the proof, and which I hoped to do with more effect by that time. I therefore wound up the story with such small abilities as I possess, neither huddling the catastrophe, as you are pleased to imply, nor in any manner injuring the success of a work in which, I would humbly think, my interest is scarcely inferior to your own. As I am very far from wishing any hasty expression to escape me, I shall not allude to the paragraph of your letter concerning the moneyed advantages you speak of for a different termination, but proceed to clause 2. I am not willing to extend the work to 15 numbers. My reasons shall be quite at your service if you care for them."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *Dec.* 18, 1839.

"The post which brought your letter conveyed also one from M'Glashan in a very angry tone, half implying that my new book was withdrawing my interest in 'Lorrequer,' and evidently savage that I was getting at the London market. I answered sharply to each section of the epistle, expressed my sorrow for offering him what suited Bentley to take, and assured him that my credit as author, *tant peu qu'il soit*, was quite as dear to me as his pence as bookseller could ever be to him. Result a most handsome and apologetic letter from him ascribing his petulance to ill health, and accepting my new book at £50 per No.—the whole to run to 12 to 20 Nos.—*i.e.*, £600 to £1000. Not bad after all, and better than more solid productions, which pay little and are read less.

"Will you then see M'G., to whom I have written accepting his money for 'The Dragoon,' and add, what I have not, that I was, on the arrival of his letter, actually concluding one to Bentley in acceptance of his offer for the MS., but that as *gage d'amitie* between us, I have stood by him and rejected the illustrious Dick. This from you will conclude the pacific relations so eminently necessary between the fiery and tiger natures of author and publisher, whose business is not 'to die,' but to squabble everlastingly.

"The lost MS. of 'Lorrequer' is, it seems, come to hand, but not before I rewrote or rather wrote

another finale. This cost me four sleepless nights and a fit of gout from chagrin and champagne, necessary to bring me up to the scribbling paroxysm.

"What my new book is to run upon I have not as yet the least notion, but trust to chance and after dinner — for invention; and last, not least, to the moneyed stimulus—for material. . . .

"I have been exceedingly gay—dining at the Embassy and elsewhere, and thinking of everything save book-making. However, as I have not ten pounds in the house, and owe about a hundred, I must haul my wind and bear up in time.

. . . . . .

"On second thoughts it will be right for M'Glashan not to advertise 'The Dragoon' by title in the last number of 'Lorrequer,'—only 'a new work by Harry Lorrequer.' This, as regards my previous negotiations with Bentley, is necessary."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *Christmas Day*, 1839.

"I wish with all my heart that we (meaning John[1] among the number) could eat our plum-pudding together. If that day ever arrives, God knows. It is strange enough how few—very few—early friends can be found within the ring-fence of a Xmas fire when the pursuits of after-life have laid hold on them. We three are a striking instance of it. . . .

[1] His brother, the Rev. John Lever.—E. D.

"I meditate a trip to Ireland about April. . . .

"Doctoring here is at zero, the whole world of English travellers having flocked southwards. Though the printing-press stands to me, the physic bottle does not. Since August last, when I returned home, I have not received £50, and have spent £350. The 'Dragoon' must fight me through this."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"BRUSSELS, *Jan.* 10, 1840.

"The new Postage Act will be a sorer blow to you than even to her Majesty's Exchequer—but from very opposite causes. As I learn it comes into operation on the 12th, I start for the post with it.

"All kinds of misfortunes and delays have befallen my unlucky MSS. of late, and whether the public is ever to see the end of 'Harry Lorrequer' is more than I can tell. But whatever the faults of the F. O. be, M'Glashan's agent in London has also his share in the calamity, being the stupidest *gauche* that ever existed.

"Although I wrote to P. S. about John's baptismal certificate, I have not yet received reply. At the moment I am too hard up to spare a sou, and must ask you to send me the £15 or £20 you speak of with the proceeds of my last two articles in the D. U. I mean the two reviews in Nov. and Dec., and if Butt be in my debt, — as I believe, — perhaps M'Glashan would see to it for me. I have above £150 to pay here

at this confounded season, and something like that number of pence to meet it with.

"Will you also ask M'G. what times of payment will be arranged for 'The Dragoon,' as although I leave the thing to his convenience, it will suit mine much to have some definite knowledge on the subject.

"I have thrown physic to the dogs, for really there is nothing to do. I think, *entre nous*, I must go farther—perhaps to Florence or Naples.

"I have dedicated 'Lorrequer' to Sir H. Seymour, by his special request, which at the same time interferes with my original wish and determination to inscribe it to Lord Douro, who [? half] expects it.

"Since I wrote last I have been laid up with gout in my wrist and knuckles and both feet, and now can only walk with cloth shoes and a stick. . . . The 'Irish Dragoon' has been shelved these twelve days."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"*Jan.* 17, 1840.

"A most absurd blunder has induced a certain Charles O'Malley, Esq., barrister-at-law, and leader of the Western Circuit, to suppose that my new book under that name is meant to be his Life, &c. And the consequence is that a meeting of the Bar has taken place at Litton's, and resolutions entered to compel a change of title.

"Now as I never heard of this gentleman, nor with a very widespread acquaintance do I know

of one single Mr O'Malley, I have refused point-blank. My book is already advertised in all the London papers, and if I changed the name for another, any individual bearing the newly-adopted one would have — what Mr O'Malley has not — just and sufficient ground of quarrel with me.

"All my friends here—military, diplomatic, and literary—agree in this view, Lord Lennox, Ranelagh, Suffield, &c., saying that it would be a very weak thing indeed to yield, and one which would undoubtedly reflect both upon my courage and judgment.

"I write these few hurried lines to put you *en courant* to what is going on. . . .

"For God's sake send me some gilt. I am terribly hard up just now."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *Jan.* 30, 1840.

"I am in the greatest anxiety to hear from M'Glashan, as a MS.—the first of 'O'Malley'—has not yet been acknowledged by him, and if lost will cause me serious inconvenience, — for I never have a copy of a MS.

"What you observe about the change of name is very just, but the demand, not request, made a very great difference in the matter. Besides that, a book once advertised as it was in all the London papers is seriously injured by any change of title, — such is at least the view of the trade.

"I am working away, *malgré* gout and dyspepsia,

but by no means satisfied with my labours or sanguine about their success. So long as I had done nothing I felt indifferent on this head, but the unmerited success of 'Lorrequer' has stimulated me to do better, and it appears likely that I may do worse—for such I feel at present. Time will tell. Meanwhile I go on,—for needs must when somebody is the coachman.

"If you could discover any source of story or anecdote for me, the service would be inestimable. Droll, comic, ludicrous situations I covet; I have latterly become as grave as a hermit, trying to invent fun."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Quartier Leopold, Brussels, *Dec.* 20, 1840.

"You will be sorry to learn that Wright's failure has let me in for a loss which, however small, is something to one still smoked. His correspondent here, a Mr Berry (?) King, took the opportunity of failing offered by the great man's break up, and failed accordingly. He was my banker, which doubtless was another predisposing cause for a mishap. You may remember how a very small credit I once opened with the bank in Coleraine made them close in a week. However, as some one remarked with much good nature, 'It's only another book,'—and so I feel it. Meanwhile I am very hard up, as this is the season of yearly accounts being sent in. With Curry I am in advance, for unluckily, to oblige this confounded Berry King,

I gave him my booksellers' bills when drawn—which he has since appropriated.

"Forgive me, my dear friend, all this long story of worry and annoyance, which, now that I have told it, has relieved my mind considerably.

"But, after all, I have found it a hard task and sore test of my courage for the last five weeks to go on daily bolting the egotism, selfishness, and sordid meanness of my sick world, and at night writing till one or two or three o'clock every imaginable kind of nonsense, with a heavy heart and an aching head—for means, ay, for means,—only to continue the same dull drudgery somewhat longer. This is a confession only for a very dear friend. . . .

"My loss with the rascal is about £280—but it is all lost, for however Wright may come round my friend is most genteely cleared out.

"I have written a squib for the D. U. M.—'The Chateau de Vandyck.' Look at it."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Quartier Leopold, Brussels, *Dec.* 28, 1840.

"I was just puzzling my brains with the knotty problem how to pay two hundred with one, when the solution of the difficulty came from another quarter—a most civil letter from the Currys, enclosing me £100 *en cadeau de saison*, expressing themselves sorry that their finances limited the present, and in fact doing the thing handsomely. The letter contained a pressing proposition to continue 'O'Malley' to 20 Nos.—a project my pocket,

but not my brains, concurs in. I fear much that the public may grow very weary of the mere narrative details of battle and bloodshed which must necessarily make up the staple of the additional Nos., but they reply that the Peninsular part is likely to be popular, and in fact press me to give what in a chance conversation I hinted,—a prolongation down to Waterloo, to conclude with the battle, which [task] as regards locality, &c., I have many opportunities for making a strong thing.

"I should like to have your opinion on this. The plan is to publish the present ten numbers at once complete in one vol., and then proceed seriatim with the others. In a trade point of view a good idea; but the fear is, shall I not mar all by spinning out?—for so much has my head been running on other matters that I have latterly sat down to write without a particle of material in my mind, and merely ran on mechanically stringing sentences, sometimes so far away from the whole thing that but for my wife I had given wrong names to the characters and [made] a dozen similar blunders.

"I am about to have a special audience of the king on Friday. My grandeur costs me nearly £50 for a uniform. Do you know, 'I'm Captain in the Derry Militia' and aide-de-camp to somebody! His Majesty has been graciously pleased to move his royal jaws in laughter at something in 'O'Malley,' and I am to wait upon him while he expounds that same to me in French,—a great bore on many accounts, but an unavoidable one, such requests being very imperative. I am told

I shall be asked to dinner, but this I don't calculate on. . . .

"The whole population is skating, and the consumption of schnaps is tremendous. . . .

"The war rumour is over for the present, but both parties have shown their teeth, and the thing will come to blows sooner or later. One must live abroad to comprehend the rooted feeling of dislike the Continent entertains towards England. Waterloo is as great a grudge to the Prussians and Austrians as to the beaten French themselves,—and all the nations hate us."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Quartier Leopold, Brussels, *Feb.* 15, 1841.

". . . I am getting so much more to like the literary [life] than the medical one, that I think very often of abandoning the latter for the former; not, I entreat you to believe, on the strength of anything I have hitherto done (of which I feel in no way vain), but of what I hope and trust I shall do in the future.

"Bentley has this day offered me £1000 for a new book of 12 Nos., but don't mention this to any one, for I would not treat with him *pro* or *con* without making Curry & Co. perfectly *au fait* to all. I owe this equally to myself and to them. They [Curry & Co.] have been most honourable in all their dealings, and they shall certainly not lose by treating me so; in fact, it is in reconnaissance for this conduct that I am now continuing 'O'Malley' to two vols. when double pay awaits

me in another quarter. I have also accepted no remuneration for my MSS. lost by fire, so that I think all the generosity comes not on one side."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Quartier Leopold, Brussels, *May* 16, 1841.

"I never felt so provokingly pressed, and all for the ill-conduct of others. I have at the moment nearly £200 due to me, and yet I cannot get a sou, and despair of ever receiving more than one-fourth of it.

"Curry is most punctual, but even his fifties won't do everything, and I am sorely put out. Meanwhile, to drown care, I am working hard at my book, and have two whole numbers written in advance after that to appear on the 1st June, so that you see I am not idle.

"I am pleased at your kind mention of the last No., which I half feared was not good; but I am so easily inclined to believe what I wish, that your good-natured criticism has put me on good terms with myself. My next No. is, I think, my best. I should much like your opinion when you see it. I have written to John; indeed I deluge him with letters—but with an object,—for I plainly see how much benefit my 'distraction' does the poor fellow, and what service it is to take him out of the harness even for a moment, and although I have nothing of interest to tell, yet the very fact that we are engaged about each other has its excitement, and from what *I* feel I know he also must be the better. . . .

"I am actually nervous when a day's illness comes on me, and solely for this cause [namely, that he feared he could not keep up his insurance payments]. I don't mention this in any low spirits and depression, but as the only available mode I can think of for tying up my hands,—for whatever is once devoted to any given object I'll refrain from, and there is no fear of my incurring debt, though I freely confess I can spend my utmost farthing."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"*June* 22, 1841.

"I almost thought I should have had another gossip with you ere this—*je vous dirai pourquoi*,—don't laugh, though I'll forgive you even if you should,—but I received a requisition asking me to allow myself to be put in nomination for Trinity College at the coming election. As I write hurriedly, I can only say that although the matter gave me more surprise than satisfaction, yet on thinking over it, weighing all the *pros* and *cons*, reflecting that, although unsuccessful now, I might, if well supported, be luckier at a later period; and finally, thinking that politics are about the best trade going, I said rather more yea than nay: all the calculations of my friends say that Shaw must be beaten, and [ ] has no hope, if contested. The B. of Exeter is most warm in my cause, and says, 'Start for Trinity, for if unsuccessful there, your colours are shown and you'll get another ship.'

"Now I have gone cautiously to work. I have said, Tell me what can you do for me? say what

forces can you bring into the field in my support? what are my chances? what are my expenses?

"The medicals would stand by me well, so would a large section of my Bar friends. The parsons are, however, the main body. What would they do? I can't guess.

"Meanwhile I am on the tenter-hooks: each post may decide me one way or the other, and, to confess the fact, I have enormous confidence in my good luck. I never pushed it yet without a fortunate result, and I am more than ever inclined to test its constancy.

"I write these few and very hurried lines solely to apprise you of what is going forward. Before this reaches you the whole may have ended in smoke, or I may be on my way over.

"If the latter, I shall of course be as anxious as may be; only believe one thing: rash as I may seem when determined to make a spring, I take time enough, before I gird for the effort, to reflect upon the consequences and calculate the results. With my warmest regard to you and yours."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"*June* 1841.

"I send you the last four vols. of Capefigue. Are you doing anything further for M'Glashan, and what? What would you think of translating some of the *feuilletons* of the French papers? they are either short stories or clever [?literary] criticisms. I could always give you a supply of the freshest. Do tell me what you think of this, and

for once in your life, my dear friend, speak a little of yourself and your own concerns."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"*July* 2, 1841.

"I send you some *feuilletons* which, if you translate, I should take. The 'Chasse au [ ]' is admirable.

"I have been applied to to write a Life of Napoleon on a great scale, based on Capefigue's work. (Don't speak of this to Curry.) I look for a big sum, but the negotiation hangs."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Quartier Leopold, Brussels, *July* 3, 1841.

"The opportunity of sending my letter having failed me at the time I expected, I reopen my package to add a few more words. I have read your kind letter with much attention, and a most sincere gratitude for the evidence of an interest I never doubted. Circumstances have rendered the pursuit hopeless at present, but the future chances I should look to with some anxiety and hope,—and I'll tell you why. Should I succeed in getting in, I know from the opinion of those high in position how much the work of even an inferior person is looked for and prized by a party, and to what uses can be put the man who has acquired a certain readiness at reply [some words undecipherable here], the way of publication, and what [? friends] assist him.

"I do not mean to say that even the ambition

of such a position in society would repay one who likes his ease for the wear and tear, anxiety, turmoil, and annoyance of political existence, but what I mean is this, that an equal quantity of work directed to the interests of a party is better paid and better advantaged than when executed for a publisher. And when I see the men of my own standing—and I could name a dozen such who neither have done anything as yet, nor can they in future—well off, promoted, placed, and provided for, simply because they took up public life as a trade, *vice* a profession, I am well disposed to think that with a very long acquaintance and a strong troop of what the world calls friends, some character, and a strong determination to get on,—why, I think the game a good one.

"Well as you know me, you as well as John make one mistake about me. I am not—I never was—a sanguine man. I have pumped up false enthusiasm many a time till it has imposed even upon myself, and when success came people said I predicted it, but, my dear friend, I never was fortunate yet without being the man most astonished at my own good luck. This I mention that you may know that it is no piece of soft unction I am flattering myself with, but a cold cautious calculation in which for a certain outlay of labour, directed in a way I like, I look for a certain amount of income. But enough of myself, my hopes, fears, plots, perplexities. . . .

"Folds has just been decreed the sum of £8000 for his fire (as malicious burning). Will you try

and ascertain if any remuneration is to be made to me for my losses, a considerable portion of my MSS. being burnt and destroyed, for which I have received no amends?"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"BRUSSELS, *July* 19, 1841.

"I wrote lately to you mentioning, among other matters, some hopes I entertained that Mr Folds' fire might prove a most genial flame, warming not only him but me. Is this a likely circumstance? I would not wish the Currys in any manner to be involved in the reparation—if such there be—to be made to me, but if Mr Folds really does receive compensation for his type, why should not I for my tale? To him, therefore, would I look, and I think in justice he can't refuse my application.

"The weather here is awful beyond anything I ever heard of—incessant rain, cold and strong winds, the harvest greatly injured, the hay totally ruined. How are you off in Ireland?

"In election matters your success has been indeed triumphant. I have just learned from our Ambassador that he has received a title from 'The Duke.' The party are up in the stirrups and delighted with the success. The only certain appointment as yet made out is that of Lord de Grey formerly (Lord) Grantham, Lord Ripon's brother, to be Viceroy. This is from the Duke, and may be relied on. Lord Londonderry is spoken of as Ambassador for Paris, but they hope to send

him to Russia. Lord Lyndhurst is pretty sure of the Chancellorship if his age doesn't prevent his acceptance. It is all nonsense about his being named Ambassador to Paris: his wife could not be received there, where her father had been for years a paid spy of the police, mixing in the lowest walk, and among the most debased and degenerate associates. . . .

"I believe M'Glashan is coming to see me. John, I fear, has given up his trip; and indeed if he did come, I'd rather he would do so when I was quite free of all the other visitors, for I think he would only be bored by the artistic clique by whom, for the next few weeks, I am likely to be surrounded.

"Are you doing anything in the writing way? Or is there anything here in the book market which you would like to look at? A very valuable and a still more amusing book is just published in Paris, called 'Le Forçat,' in which the whole state and condition of the prisoner at the galleys is displayed, illustrating the history of crime and punishment in a most curious and remarkable light. What would you think of making from this material some article for the D. U. Mag.?

"You see I am most anxious about [exploiting] you, and more than all, because I can answer for your success. Pray, my dear friend, don't neglect what I know to be your qualification, and what with such as you would deem very little labour must prove a good [? speculation] as regards money."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"BRUSSELS, *Aug.* 8, 1841.

"I am delighted to find that at last you have taken my advice. The 'Chasse' is capital. I read it to M'Glashan last night. He is much pleased with it. I shall now continue to pour in *feuilletons* on you, and you must work.

"We are about to start for a ramble into Germany with M'Glashan, taking my own horses. We shall probably remain some weeks. I have arranged with him about several things,—among others, a work in two vols. on Belgium. Some articles on Capefigue would tell, and certainly 'The Forçat' would be worth your while dipping into. . . .

"If I only had sufficient pluck to cut calomel and camphor, I think I could even save money. As it is, I am only pulling the devil by the tail from one year's end to the other."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"BRUSSELS, *Sept.* 7, 1841.

"I have just returned from a five weeks' ramble in Germany, where I have been greatly delighted. M'Glashan was with us; he will tell you all our adventures."

'Jack Hinton' was causing him just as much anxiety as 'O'Malley' had produced. He told M'Glashan that the book would drive him mad; that he could think of nothing else, and that he could enjoy no rest until he had finished it.

He sighed often for the companionship of some sympathetic friends; and one day he was delighted to welcome two very distinguished ones—Samuel Lover and Hablot K. Browne. M'Glashan wanted to have a "portrait of the author" for 'Jack Hinton,' and Lover was commissioned to paint the portrait. Phiz came to consult Lever about the illustrations for his new book, Lever having entered a protest against Browne's tendency to caricature.

Samuel Lover described this visit as being a round of boisterous merriment. Their host introduced the two artists to Commissary-General Mayne, who was the prototype of Major Monsoon in 'Charles O'Malley.' Mayne dined with them daily, and they "laughed themselves sick" over his stories. They held a ceremony of installation of "The Knights of Alacantra,"—Lever, Lover, and Phiz being made Grand Crosses of the order. There was music and a procession and a grand ballet. Writing to M'Glashan shortly after the Lover-Phiz visitation, the author of 'Charles O'Malley' said: "If I have a glass of champagne left—we finished nine dozen in the sixteen days Lover and Phiz spent here—I'll drink it to your health."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"*Nov.* 2, 1841.

"I have been daily, for some weeks past, hoping to have some news to tell you respecting your MS., and at last am forced to write without.

I sent it over to Bentley with a pressing letter, for in my avarice his £12, 12s. per sheet tempted me, instead of the miserable pay of the D. U. M., which gives but £7 for nearly double the quantity. He kept me waiting his reply for six weeks, and then I hear that the press of literary matter is such that no article can be read for some time to come. I have, of course, written to get it back, and yesterday wrote to Chambers to secure it a berth in the 'Journal,' where, if I succeed, the pay is still better than 'Dublin,' and the road for future contributions more open and available.

"Though I know you will attribute this delay not to any lukewarmness of mine, yet am I not the less provoked. All these things require patience in the beginning, however, and had I been discouraged, as I confess I very nearly was, I should never have written a second chapter of 'Lorrequer,' much less what followed it.

"Indeed, to give you an idea of editorial discernment: the story most quoted and selected by reviewers for praise was, three years and a half before I began the 'Confessions,' sent up to the D. U. M., and rejected by Butt as an unworthy contribution. And this [story] was afterwards pronounced by 'Fraser's Magazine' the best bit of modern humour. So much for one critic or author.

"There are many things daily coming out in the French press I wish you would attack. Are you aware that Mrs Gore's novels, bought for £500 each set (3 vols.), are only translations

with a newly invented title? Such is the fact. My time latterly has been tolerably occupied by finishing 'O'Malley,' which required a double No. for December, and making the *début* of my new hero Jack Hinton—besides which doctoring, and occasionally scribbling short articles for the 'University.' I wish much you had seen the first volume of 'Our Mess.' I am more than usually nervous about its success. Every new book is a new effort, and the world is often discontented with the forthcoming work of a man whom their own flattery induced to commit himself at first.

"My idea of Jack Hinton is of an *exceedingly English* young Guardsman coming over to Ireland at the period of the Duke of Richmond's vice-royalty, when every species of rackety [? doings] was in vogue. The contrasts of the two countries as exhibited in him, and those about him, form the tableaux of the book. The story is a mere personal narrative.

"Browne (Phiz) has been with us for the last few weeks making arrangements about the illustrations, and I think this part, at least, will be better than heretofore. M'Glashan is very fair about the whole concern, and promises liberally in the event of success."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Quartier Leopold, Brussels, *Nov.* 14, 1841.

"Dublin, if I am to trust the papers, is a changed city, and indeed I am disposed to believe them, and to have a great hope that a

moderate Government with Tory leanings would be the fairest chance for peace in so disturbed a country.

"I have been scribbling about Lord Eliot in the last Mag.[1]

"I am working—what for me is very hard indeed,—writing five or six hours daily; not going into society, dining early, and taking a half bottle of hock at my dinner. With all my early hours and abstinence my feet are swelled up, and I can scarcely walk when I get up in the morning.

"I have written to M'Glashan to give you a proof of 'Jack Hinton — No. 1 — which I wish you'd read over, and then send on to John. I'd like to have your opinion (both of you) about it: don't forget this.

"I have also hinted to John a scheme of which I have been thinking for some time—which is to retire from my profession ere it retires from me, — in plain words, to seek some cheap (and perhaps nasty) place where I could grub on for a few hundreds per annum and lay by a little. Here I am pulling the devil by the tail the whole year through, and only get sore fingers for my pains; and as my contract with Curry secures me £1200 per annum for three years at least, perhaps I ought not to hesitate about adopting some means of letting a little of it, at least, escape the wreck. Give this your consideration, and say also if you know of a nice cottage in Wicklow, about twenty-five to thirty miles

[1] "Ireland and her Rulers": D. U. M., Nov. 1841.

from town, where I could transfer myself bag and baggage—furniture and all—at a moment's warning. My only chance of economy is to be where money cannot be spent, and if I lived for £700 per annum (a liberal allowance too) in Ireland, the remaining five would be well worth laying by.

"I could have the editorship of 'Bentley's Miscellany' at a salary of £800 per annum, but this would involve living in London. I could bring over a governess for my brats from this, and without much trouble import as many of my here habits as I care for."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *Dec.* 17, 1841.

"Thanks for your most kind and affectionate letter. I think you are mistaken as to Brussels, and suppose that gaiety, society, &c., are stimulants that I can't live without. Now the fact is, I do so at the moment, and have done for a long while past,—society being the very thing that unhinges me for writing, my slippers and my fireside being as essential to me as my pen and inkbottle. Secondly, the *incognito* that you deem of service (as John does) is not what you suppose. It is only a *nom de guerre*, when my own name is seen throughout; and in England, where I am more read and prize the repute higher, Charles Lever is as much a pseudonym as Harry Lorrequer, for indeed H. L. is believed to exist, and no one cares whether C. L. does or not.

"What I thought of was not society, not a

[? fashionable] neighbourhood: scenery, quiet, cheapness above all. I sent you a, I thought, very good [? story]: pray agree with me and translate it. I hope to hear something from Chambers every post, and when I do you shall know.

"I open a series of papers next month in the 'U. Magazine,' called, I believe, 'Nuts and Nut-Crackers.' This is a secret, however, and done to prevent M'Glashan reprinting 'Our Mess' in his confoundedly stupid journal."

The pleasure he derived from Lover's company made Lever more anxious than ever to pay a visit to Ireland, and gradually he came to the conclusion that he would be happier and more free from worries in his native land than he would be in any other portion of the globe. He proposed to M'Glashan that he should settle down in the neighbourhood of Dublin and take up the editorship of the 'University Magazine.' He was now willing to relinquish for ever the profession of medicine. M'Glashan was agreeable, and offered to pay Lever £1200 a-year, "with half profits, on all he wrote." These negotiations were not completed until the close of the year 1841.

And then the restless novelist could think of nothing but of his speedy return to the land of his birth. He nourished a plan for a touring expedition through Ireland, disguised as a Frenchman. He had a sheaf of designs for Irish humorous publications, — 'The Weekly Quiz,' to be illustrated by Phiz; 'Blarney,' which was to be

launched on the 1st of April. There was also to be a series for the magazine entitled "Noctes Lorrequeriana"—an Irish 'Noctes Ambrosianæ.' Another contemplated work was 'The Wild Songs of the West'—a mock collection of pseudo-original Irish ballads, to be composed by Lever himself. A short time previously he had formulated a larger scheme—'The Irish, by Themselves,' a comprehensive volume to be written by various hands, and to be bound in "a bright emerald cover, with an Irishman on a spit and another one roasting him, according to Swift."

But all these Hiberniose projects came to nought.

In January 1842 we see the last of Charles Lever as a medical man. He advertised his practice for sale and left Brussels, fervently hoping that he would find contentment in his own country.

He did not put aside the lancet lightly. Shortly before his death, referring to this crisis in his career, he made this avowal: "Having given up the profession, for which I believe I had some aptitude, to follow the precarious life of a writer, I suppose I am admitting only what many others, under like circumstances, might declare—that I have had my moments, and more than mere moments, of doubt and misgiving that I had made the wiser choice; and, bating the intense pleasure an occasional success has afforded, I have been led to think that the career I abandoned would have been more rewarding, more safe from reverses, and less exposed to those variations of

public taste which are the terrors of all who live by the world's favour."

It is doubtful whether Lever would have succeeded in reaching the higher walks of medicine; and it is pretty certain that he would not have found contentment in jogging along the beaten tracks. His temperament was too unstable to admit of the incessant and inalienable toil which helps to make the great physician. Having once started upon the literary path, if he had turned aside from it he would never have been free from misgivings that he had abandoned the road to fortune and to fame. If he had endeavoured to confine his intellectual powers to the study and practice of the healing art, and if success had crowned his efforts, it is most likely that his life would have been more even and more happy; but he would have missed the moments of exaltation which were worth living for, even if they were followed occasionally by periods of abysmal melancholy. Lever the physician could have benefited only those with whom he came into direct contact: Lever the novelist could, and did, provide a rich fund of healthy enjoyment for a vast circle of his contemporaries, and for posterity. One can hardly doubt that in abandoning medicine for fiction he chose the better part.

VI.

TEMPLEOGUE.

1842–1845.

Nothing if not thorough—for the moment—Lever heralded his assumption of the editorial chair of 'The Dublin University' with a trumpet-blast. In the April number of the Magazine there is published an "Editor's Address," in which "Harry Lorrequer" informs his kind friends the public that Ireland's National Magazine has been entrusted to his guidance. "For many long years," continues Lorrequer, "this position has been the object of my ambition. . . . In announcing the appearance of a new journal, the editor enjoys the time-honoured privilege of informing the public what literary miracles it is his intention to perform; how he shall fill up all the deficiencies observable in other periodicals; how smart will be his witty contributors, how deep his learned ones; what soundness will characterise his political views; by what acumen and impartiality his criticisms will be distinguished. In fact, to believe him, you would say that until that moment journalism had

been a poor, barren, and empty performance, and that all the able and gifted writers of the day had, by some strange fatality, suffered their wits to lie fallow. This is the more singular, as such announcements usually appear once or twice a-year, and the world seems never the wiser six months later. Happily for our Magazine, happily for myself, I have no such power in my hands. . . . Far be it from me to institute comparisons between myself and that first of editors who moulds the destinies of 'Blackwood's'; but this I will say, that if the coachman on the box be an inferior whip—and this I honestly confess—his team is unsurpassed."

This flamboyant piece of writing is dated Dublin, March 21, 1842, but in all probability it was written in Brussels when the fever of the editorship first attacked him. He must have referred to the Address and smiled at it a few months later, for in June he declared to a friend that the unsurpassed team was "as groggy a set of screws as ever marched in harness. God forgive me," he ejaculated, "for my editorial puff of them!"

'Jack Hinton, the Guardsman,' had reached its seventh chapter when Lever took charge of the Magazine. Following the example of 'Charles O'Malley' and 'Harry Lorrequer,' 'The Guardsman' was issued in monthly parts, with illustrations by Phiz. 'Nuts and Nut-Crackers' commenced in the March number of the Magazine.

Lever's Irish friends found it very difficult to procure the ideal "cottage" for him. Stillorgan and Glenegary (near Kingstown) had power to

charm him only for a while. At length he found rest in Temple-oge (or Templeogue) House, an old mansion situated about four miles south-west of Dublin city, in the midst of glorious scenery—hill and dale, woodland and stream. The grounds of Templeogue House were picturesque. Inside the high walls were spacious courtyards; there were extensive gardens, terraced walks, "the remains of ambitious avenues," and an old Dutch waterfall. The dwelling-house itself was said to have been a Knights Templars' residence, and to have been occupied at a later period by Lord Santry. It had a ghost-room[1] and subterraneous passages. In the near neighbourhood stood Montpelier, a castellated building, at one time the principal resort of the Hell-Fire Club.[2]

In June 1842 Templeogue welcomed a distinguished visitor—the author of 'The Snob Papers.' Thackeray's object in voyaging in Ireland was to collect material for his 'Sketch-Book,' and he expected to find a congenial spirit in the author of 'Charles O'Malley.'

[1] It was supposed that the ghost was the shade of O'Loughlin Murphy, who in the course of an eighteenth-century orgie had been filled with whisky by Lord Santry. When the whisky overflowed the noble lord put a light to Murphy's mouth and made a holocaust of him. Lord Santry was tried for the murder, but it happened that a cousin of his owned the water-supply of Dublin, and threatened to cut off the supply if his relative was hanged. Incredible as it may seem, the Viceroy yielded under the threat, and the life of Lord Santry was spared.—E. D.

[2] Upon one occasion the members of this club set fire to their club-room and (in order to show their contempt for certain torments preached from the pulpit) endured the flames until they were nearly roasted to death.—E. D.

The first dinner-party—a small one—given by Lever in honour of his illustrious guest is graphically described by Major Dwyer:[1] "After the ladies had retired the two protagonists began to skirmish. Neither knew much of the other, except what could be gleaned from their published works. . . . The conversation had been led by Lever to the subject of the battle of Waterloo: he wished to afford Captain Siborne"[2]—one of the guests—"an opportunity of saying a word; perhaps, too, he wanted to show that he himself knew something of the matter. . . . Thackeray soon joined in: he did not pretend to know anything about the great battle, but he evidently wished to spur on Lever to identify himself with Charles O'Malley. . . . Quickly perceiving his antagonist's game, Lever met his (Thackeray's) feints with very quiet but perfectly efficacious parries. It was highly interesting, and not a little amusing, to observe how these two men played each a part seemingly belonging to the other: Thackeray assuming what he judged to be a style of conversation suitable for Lever, whilst the latter responded in the sarcastic and sceptical tone proper to an English tourist in Ireland."

According to Major Dwyer's narrative, French and German literature were next discussed, Thackeray

[1] "Reminiscences of Lever and Thackeray," by Major D——. From "The Portfolio" (Appendix to 'Life of Lever' by Dr Fitzpatrick). Frank Dwyer was one of Lever's chums at Trinity. Between the two men existed a bond of friendship broken only by death.—E. D.

[2] Author of 'A History of the War in France and Belgium in 1815.'—E. D.

expressing a preference for German books. And then came the pleasantest moment of the evening. In complimenting Lever on his skill in translating German *Lieder*, Thackeray declared that he would be prouder to have written "The Pope he leads a Happy Life"—Lever's version of the student song—than anything he himself had ever put into print. The host felt this was a large dose of flattery to swallow, and he could hardly credit that Titmarsh was in earnest; but finally he was convinced that his guest meant what he had said, and his joy was intense and undisguised. Major Dwyer expresses the opinion that it was during this happy quarter of an hour the first stone of the foundation of the friendship between the two novelists was laid. Whatever reserve had existed, or whatever desire each had displayed to outshine the other, quickly vanished; and from that moment the master of Templeogue and his *confrère* vied with each other in cordiality, and the table-talk ran without restraint or reserve. "Thackeray's conversation," says Major Dwyer, "flowed more evenly on the whole, like the deeper current of a river meandering through a cultivated country. . . . Lever's resembled a mountain torrent leaping over rocks and precipices in clouds of sparkling spray."

Continuing his account of the meeting between the two novelists, Major Dwyer tells us that plans were discussed about sight-seeing. It was suggested that Thackeray should take a peep at a grand review which was to be held the follow-

ing day in the Phœnix Park. Thackeray, Lever, and Major Dwyer drove to the Chief Secretary's Lodge, and then walked to the review-ground. During the course of a cavalry charge Lever was separated from his friends, and Thackeray grew very uneasy when he beheld horsemen tearing wildly down towards him. The Major endeavoured to reassure the English novelist, but after listening to a brief lecture on military tactics, Thackeray said he preferred to review the ladies. The two men strolled homewards after the field-day, Thackeray waxing enthusiastic over Irish scenery. Then the conversation drifted to Waterloo, and Thackeray told his companion that the after-dinner conversation of the previous evening had caused him to think seriously of utilising in a work of fiction some of the incidents of the famous battle. Lever's treatment of it in 'O'Malley' was much too imaginative—in fact, much too audacious, according to Michael Angelo Titmarsh.

This visit of Thackeray to Templeogue had a disturbing effect upon Lever. The former professed not to be able to understand why the latter should prefer Dublin to London as a place of residence. The Irish capital had been drained of its literary life-blood, he argued. No Irishman of ability remained at home except those who looked for advancement in the learned professions or those who were patronised by the Viceregal Court. Thackeray suggested that Lever should carry his Magazine across the water and establish it in London, where he would be in touch with numerous

Irishmen of genuine ability. He would find that nineteen shillings out of every pound which he received came from Great Britain, and that his fame would travel faster and his purse would be more readily replenished if he was in the thick of the scramble in London rather than on the fringe of it in Dublin. Lever insisted that duty as well as his inclination bound him to his country, and that he would remain faithful to her as long as she would allow him to remain faithful. But though he spoke bravely he was shaken by the arguments of the author of 'The Irish Sketch-Book.'

'Tom Burke of Ours' was now in hand. In the previous year Lever had an idea of writing an exhaustive Life of Napoleon, and he had crammed himself with information from various sources about the Napoleonic wars. Major Dwyer recounts a dialogue between the author of 'Tom Burke' and himself, as the pair walked along the eastern pier at Kingstown. Lever asked the Major if he would write military tales, long or short, for his Magazine. Dwyer declared that he should not know how to set about such a task; and the other asserted that, to begin with, nothing was easier than to depict a field of battle. A military man, or one who had been associated with military people, could easily conjure up a vision of a battlefield. "Then create a few actors and set them in motion—and the remainder is easy enough," suggested Lever naïvely. He added a postscript to this recipe for the concoction of a

novel of military life: "You would want a woman or two." Major Dwyer declared that it was only a man who knew nothing at all about military operations who could describe a whole battle in the heroic sensational style. He then asked Lever where he had obtained the material for his soldier stories. "For what is in 'O'Malley,'" replied his companion, "I am mainly indebted to Napier; for the rest, to 'Les Victoires et Conquêtes de l'Armée Français.'"

Writing many years afterwards about 'Tom Burke,' its author mentions that he was engaged upon it when Thackeray visited him at Templeogue, intent upon gathering material for his 'Sketch-Book.' "And I believe," says Lever, "that though we discussed every other book and book-writer, neither of us ever, even by chance, alluded to what the other was doing."

Though 1842 was a very busy year with him, the master of Templeogue did not deny himself ample jollification. His house became a resort for pleasant people. Brilliant men came to talk, to jest, to listen, or to play cards. The host was an inveterate gambler. Whist was one of his passions, but he could find enjoyment in any form of gambling, from roulette to "push-pin." There is an illuminating anecdote told of a Templeogue whist-party which included Lord Muskerry. The vehicles belonging to the visitors somehow got interlocked during the night, and could not be disentangled until five o'clock in the morning, when a local blacksmith operated upon them. Two of the guests

accompanied Lord Muskerry to his house in Merrion Square, and the door was opened for them by Lady Muskerry attired in her night-gown. She is said to have "pitched in" pretty heavily to his lordship.

Naturally enough, between the pressure of his literary work and his editorial labours, and the filching of hours from the night,—in order to lengthen the days,—Lever paid the penalty. He complained that he had gone sadly to seed. He feared that the opening of 'Tom Burke' was flat. It was fortunate that he had in Mortimer O'Sullivan a friend who was able to stimulate him. O'Sullivan told him that 'Tom Burke' was anything but flat, and that it promised to be his best book. Another of his encouragers was Canon Hayman, who paid Templeogue an early visit, and who has placed it on record that when Lever was not entertaining distinguished visitors he led a quiet and healthy life, and that when he was entertaining company his only desire was to make his guests "happy —innocently happy." Riding was his favourite out-of-door exercise; and "never was he in better spirits than when far away on the Wicklow hills, with a friend by his side and his children around him on their ponies."

'Jack Hinton' concluded its serial course in December, and it was arranged that 'Arthur O'Leary' should follow it in the Magazine. Lever submitted to Canon Hayman some of the manuscript of 'Arthur O'Leary,' declaring, in one of his petulant moods, that he "detested this stuff,"—that it was easy to write it, but a labour to read it.

But the Canon insisted that 'O'Leary' was excellent, and Lever retired to his "snuggery"—an apartment of which he gives an amusing glimpse in his Magazine[1]—prepared to work until the pen dropped from his tired fingers. The smallest charge of tiresomeness could always sink him deep in gloom; and, fortunately for himself, the faintest echo of praise, coming from the lips of any one whose opinion he valued, could elevate him to the seventh heaven. He admits that "an impertinent paragraph or some malicious sneer" would cause him to toss his manuscript aside and to scribble caricatures on the sheets intended for the recording of fictional adventures.

Lever loved politics almost as ardently as he loved whist. He had an idea that in Ireland he might be enabled to cut a considerable figure in political life, but the party at whose side he was willing to serve—the Tory party—was fearful of him,—not because of any suspicion of his faithfulness or of any doubt about his ability, but because of his reputation as a humourist of the devil-may-care order. He attended occasional functions at the Viceregal Court, but he did not seem to make much headway in this direction. It is said that he resented bitterly the cold-shouldering to which the Viceroy, Lord de Grey, treated him.

The opening of 1843 found him as busy as the close of 1842 had left him; and in the spring he began to feel sadly in need of some relaxation. Moreover, he was growing anxious about 'Tom

[1] "The Sub-editor's Snuggery," in the 'D. U. Magazine' for July 1842.

Burke,' dreading lest the local colour might lack vividness. A glimpse of France would help him. Moreover, he had an idea of enlisting the services of the famous French artist, Tony Johannot, to illustrate 'Tom Burke.' In April he set out from Templeogue. He made the acquaintance in Paris of Alfred de Vigny and other men of letters, and he invited a number of them to visit him at Templeogue. For some time he had been gradually weaning himself from German literature and German proclivities, and he was fast becoming Gallicised. He had an idea of introducing a large leaven of French literature into 'The Dublin University.' On his way homewards he remained a short time in London — all his visits to London were of peculiarly brief duration,—and arrived in Dublin tired and miserable. The condition of things at the office of the Magazine did not tend to cheer him: every one was late or stupid. But he soon rallied; and, writing many years later, he tells us that at this period he had drawn round him a circle of men of great ability, and that their conversation under his own roof took a range and assumed a brilliancy which might not have been found in Holland House or Gore House. Thackeray assured him that under no other roof had he met so many agreeable and interesting people. One of the favoured guests at Templeogue House furnishes a description of the host, his face beaming, every muscle trembling with humour. "The sparkle in his merry eyes, the smile that expanded his mouth and showed his fine white teeth, the musical laugh

that stirred every heart, the finely modulated voice uttering some witty *mot*, telling some droll story or some tale of strange adventure," were all remembered when the Irish humourist was no longer a dweller in his native land.

Some amusing stories of life at Templeogue House are told. One of these concerns the novelist's publisher and friend, James M'Glashan. It must be remembered that it is a 'Lorrequer' tale. M'Glashan one night left the dinner-table early, fearing that the guests, who doubtless were exceedingly hilarious, were inclined to drink too deeply. Soon afterwards there was heard in the dining-room a strange noise. The noise continued persistently, and Lever could not at first locate it. Some of the guests suggested that it was the Templeogue ghost. At last a descent was made upon the kitchen. The kitchen was in darkness, but candle-light disclosed the publisher lying on the floor. It turned out that he had mistaken the pantry for a staircase, and he had been busy travelling up the shelves and falling from the top.

Another tale of the period concerns Dr Whately. Amongst Lever's acquaintances at Brussels was the future Archbishop of Dublin. At first when Lever took up the reins of 'The Dublin University,' the Archbishop and the editor resumed the friendly relations which had existed in Belgium, but possibly Whately fancied that the author of 'Harry Lorrequer' was a somewhat dangerous acquaintance for an Archbishop in his own diocese. Whately

was a man of hobbies, and horticulture was one of these. Soon after he was settled down in the County Dublin, Lever invited the Archbishop to dinner, and took much pains to get the correct kind of guests together. He was chagrined to find, when the dinner-hour had arrived, that instead of putting in an appearance his lordship sent a belated and lame apology. The chaplain who conveyed the apology also conveyed (as a peace-offering) an enormous pumpkin grown in the Archbishop's hot-house. Lever gravely placed the pumpkin on the chair reserved for his lordship, and during the dinner he addressed much of his conversation to it. When the guests rose from the dinner-table the host said: "In all my experience of the Archbishop, I never knew him to be so agreeable as he has been this evening."

The novelist did not forget the rebuffs he had endured at the hands of Dr Whately, and he took a somewhat mean revenge at a convenient opportunity. Whately, in addition to his love of horticulture, was rather fond of surrounding himself with sycophants. Lever happened to encounter him in Killarney. The Archbishop was rambling through some shrubberies accompanied by two submissive and expectant clergymen, and he was expatiating upon the merits of mushrooms—his most recent hobby. Observing a large fungus under a tree, his lordship stooped and seized it. Then he went on to say that it was merely prejudice on the part of an ignorant peasantry which prevented the mushroom from becoming a staple article of

food. "Try a bit of it," said he, offering the fungus to one of his companions. The unfortunate clergyman nibbled at it, and averred that it was truly delicious. The Archbishop obtained similar glowing criticism from the other clergyman. "Try it, Mr Lever," said he. "No, thank you," responded the novelist; "it would be useless." "Useless, Mr Lever! What do you mean?" "My brother is in the diocese of Meath. If he was in your lordship's diocese I'd gladly eat the whole of it."[1]

Yet another reminiscence of this period,—the scene, however, not being Templeogue but Still-organ, where Lever rented a cottage ("Oatlands") for the season. Dr Fitzpatrick relates the anecdote.

"A fat German who acted as cook, valet, and sometimes as coachman, served Lever at Oatlands. One evening the subsequent Sir W. Wilde arrived in his green gig; and while he and other friends were sitting together enjoying his sallies, another gig, driven by Kildahl, the house-agent, came to the door. The Teutonic man-of-all-work was at once deputed to mind his gig, while Kildahl joined the group within. In a few minutes the fat German entered the room, and, making a profound obeisance, said impassively, 'Das Pferd ist durchgeganger' ('The horse has run away'). Lever laughed immoderately, so did Wilde; and so infectious was the merriment that Kildahl laughed immoderately too, though without the remotest idea that the laugh had been at his own expense. His dismay at dis-

[1] This anecdote has been told by Dr Fitzpatrick and by Mr W. R. Le Fanu. The above version is Lever's, given in a private letter.—E.D.

covering the real facts may be conceived. The runaway horse and gig dashed down the steep hill of Stillorgan until all came to a dead smash at Galloping Green, the fragments being there gathered up and sent back to Dublin on a float."

Towards the end of the year Mr Samuel Carter Hall was aggrieved at the tone of a paper which appeared in the Magazine—"Modern Conciliation: Mr Hall's Letter to the Temperance Societies." Lever was not the writer of the objectionable article, but though he did not desire to stand by it he accepted the responsibility of it. Hall then proceeded to attack the novelist savagely in print. He charged him with slandering his native country and its people. This stung Lever to the quick, and without further ado he packed his valise, travelled over to London, and sent a challenge in due form to Hall. A meeting was arranged to take place at Chalk Farm, but before the principals arrived upon the ground, Hall was asked if he would withdraw his offensive letter. He consented to do so, and then Lever gave him his assurance that, personally, he had never cast any imputation on Hall's honour. Lord Ranelagh, who was the arbitrator in this "affair," said: "I suppose this is the first time four Irishmen met to shoot an Englishman and didn't do it."

This trip to London in the month of December did not do any service to Lever's health or spirits. He complained on his return of being fagged and sea-sick, and "railroaded" nigh unto death, and of suffering from crushing headaches.

At the close of 1843 the novelist is to be found making one of his queer confessions—half-jest, half-earnest—to Canon Hayman. "No man, barring a dog, could live under the heap of abuse the daily post opens upon me, every letter of the alphabet indignantly asking why I haven't published this or that tale, essay, poem, puff, song, review, or satire, and why I haven't had the common politeness to reply, . . . while I labour on with fruitless apologies to rejected addresses. I have no time to write to my friends and disarm their disgust of the atrocities of my silent system. If I were an industrious fellow all would be well; but my rule of never doing to-day what can possibly be deferred till to-morrow is occasionally the source of some confusion. Latterly I have taken a fit of dining out, chiefly because I happen to have a new coat; and I really do nothing but grumble over the work before me, and wonder what I am to do for a new plot. I believe, however, that books write themselves; and that sitting down with a title before me and a well-nibbed pen are the only essentials. And on this I rely for the performance of my pledges for the year of grace 1844."

The strain of writing, the increasing worries of editorship, and the attacks made upon him by writers politically opposed to him, were affecting Lever so much that he feared he would break down completely. Thackeray's dedication to him of 'The Irish Sketch-Book' did not tend to advance his popularity in his own land. It was rashly as-

sumed that he had prompted or suggested many things in the 'Sketch-Book' which gave offence to Lorrequer's sensitive fellow-countrymen. He had always been a heavy sleeper, but he was beginning to feel that one may have too much of a good thing. Early in 1843 he complained that he slept for twenty hours a-day and yawned through the remaining four. As the summer approached he could neither write nor read. His doctor ordered him to take a trip on the Continent—not a business visit. Still uneasy, he called in Surgeon Cusack, who warned him against railroads and steamboats. This physician informed Lever that he was suffering from apoplectic threatenings. The diagnosis caused him horrible dismay, but he begged that his wife should not be told. As August approached he found himself unable to fill a space in a proof, and he made up his mind that, as a holiday was essential, and as he had been warned against railroads, he would take a driving tour through Ireland. Accompanied by his wife, and acting as his own coachman, he drove through the counties of Wicklow and Wexford. At New Ross he ignored his friend Cusack's advice, and putting his horse and vehicle on board, he travelled to Waterford by steamboat. The journey agreed with him, and by the time he reached Lismore he imagined that he was fit for work again. In Lismore he made an effort to finish 'Tom Burke,' but the effort was a failure. He was fond of 'Tom Burke,' but he feared that there was a vast gulf between his conception of the story and the manner of his working it out. "I intended,"

he says, "to have exhibited a picture of France at a period when the prestige of a monarch had given way to the feudalism of a military state, and where the great prizes, long limited to birth and station, were thrown open for the competition of all. To depict this, and to show the lights and shadows of French military life and the contrast of our own, was also my object. I forgot my plan sometimes; sometimes my characters had a will of their own, and would go their own way." And oftener again, he modestly adds, he found himself endeavouring to accomplish something beyond his powers.

He continued the journey through Cork to Killarney, and here he was able to complete 'Tom Burke' and to project a new novel, 'The O'Donoghue.' His spirits were now reviving rapidly. Chickens and salmon were the staple fare at the various inns at which he put up; and he declared his wife and he had consumed so much fowl and fish, that they found it difficult to prevent themselves from flying and swimming. It afforded him intense delight to revisit Clare and Galway. Here he describes himself "climbing mountains, fording rivers, crossing bays, tramping along roads" with such assiduity, that pen and ink were out of the question. At Gort he was serenaded by a temperance band—the band playing all the songs in 'Charles O'Malley.' Its author made a speech by moonlight, and invited the serenaders to tea in the parlour of his inn. He continued his now joyous career through Mayo, refreshing himself with

glimpses of the scenery of a country which was for ever associated in his memory with his earliest encourager, Maxwell.[1]

This pleasant outing refreshed and reinvigorated him, and the symptoms of the brain trouble, of which he had been warned, disappeared. But he was determined to lead a more quiet life.[2]

During the autumn of 1844 he was visited by Mr Stephen Pearce, the portrait-painter, who had arrived in Ireland in order to execute a commission. A feeling of mutual regard seems to have sprung up at once between the artist and the novelist. Lever invited Pearce on a visit, and this visit was prolonged into a sojourn of two years. During these two years Mr Pearce painted his host's portrait. He also made a sketch of his study — described as a little room with quaint sideboard of carved oak, dark-brown cabinet, curiously sculptured, and heavy brocade curtains across the door. Into this sketch the artist introduced a back view of Lever sitting at the fireplace bending over the fire. He made a sketch of the house, too, bringing into the picture a view of the old cascade,[3] portrayed by Lever

[1] Maxwell had left Ireland by this time. He is said to have died (in poverty) in Scotland in 1850, but there is some dispute as to the date of his death.—E. D.

[2] Major Leech informed Dr Fitzpatrick that Lever "lived at the rate of £3000 a-year at Templeogue."

[3] I have endeavoured, unsuccessfully, to trace these pictures. In 1896 Mr Pearce told me that he was unable to throw any light upon their whereabouts. He also informed me that, in addition to the pictures mentioned above, he had made at Bagni di Lucca a chalk drawing of Lever's head.—E. D.

as "none of your rollicking harum-scarum things called waterfalls, but a solid, steady, discreet fall, coming heavily down, step by step, some hundred yards in the midst of a large meadow."

Mr Pearce enjoyed the society of his host so keenly that he was only a short time under his roof when he offered to become his amanuensis, and Lever, who was always hearing of growls about the illegibility of his "copy," readily accepted the artist's proposal. To Dr Fitzpatrick Mr Pearce furnished a most interesting account of life at Templeogue. On fine afternoons Lever and he rode into the office of 'The Dublin University' at a rattling pace. Sometimes the three children accompanied them on their ponies. A party of urchins were in the habit of meeting the equestrians on the outskirts of Dublin city—at Portobello Bridge. This motley crowd—known as "Lever's pack"—followed the chase right up to the office of the Magazine in Sackville Street, sometimes yelping like hounds. At the door of Messrs Curry & Co.'s shop there was generally a fierce struggle amongst the youths for the honour of holding Lever's horse. It is needless to add that "the pack" was treated liberally by its master.

If the weather was wet, Lever did not venture into the city. One of his favourite pastimes was to ride about the grounds with his children, encouraging them to gallop, or to jump over trunks of fallen trees, giving a wild "hurroo" whenever they took a jump together.

Lever's hospitality, generous and open-hearted

as it was, had none of the wildness with which it was the habit to credit it in these days. Mr Pearce says that his manner was to make the house and everything in it seem to belong to his guests, but his residence in Brussels had made him "quite foreign in his dinners and his wines"; and much as he had written about whisky, it was a beverage not to be found in Templeogue House. The children dined at two o'clock, and Lever and his wife made this their luncheon. He usually slept for an hour after this meal, and then he would wake up, good-humoured and brisk, and ready for a bout of work.

"Though he was full of energy in anything he took up," says Mr Pearce, "he was sometimes very indolently inclined. Often and often I used to try to tempt him to dictate. Sometimes I succeeded, and at other times he would vote it a bore. . . . I have known him to be so dissatisfied with his morning's or evening's work that he destroyed it. At other times his flashing and brilliant thoughts carried him on for a great length of time, pacing the room excitedly, while his delivery of words was so rapid that it was impossible to keep pace with them. . . . But he never allowed too slow absorption on paper of his thick-coming fancies, rapidly dictated, to elicit an exclamation of impatience. He was always genial, gentle, good-humoured; and at times as playful as a child."

Life at Templeogue during the days of Mr Pearce's sojourn was singularly peaceful. The

only "outbreaks" were occasional dinner-parties,—generally assemblages of brilliant men; and when the more staid amongst the guests had left for the city, it was Lever's custom to wind up the night with whist. The host was always overflowing with good stories: frequently his guests forgot that time was running away, and were startled by observing the daylight peeping in through the chinks of the window-shutters. Mr Pearce relates one of these card-table anecdotes.

"When the 11th Hussars arrived in Dublin, their notoriety made them a great attraction, owing to the Earl of Cardigan being their colonel, and the numerous duels and quarrels that had occurred in the regiment. One of their officers, after a *levée*, was walking along Sackville Street, on a sunny afternoon, in full dress, and was met by two Irishmen fresh from the country. Staggered at the glittering and gorgeous apparition clanking towards them, they riveted their eyes on the blazing gold, blue, and crimson figure, and, with a wondering gaze, the one exclaimed to the other, with a sharp nudge in the ribs and a look of exquisite fun — 'Begorra, wouldn't I like to have the chance of pawning him!'"

Lever could hardly avoid falling into traps such as he would set for his own characters. One of these accidents has its amusing and its pleasant side. He wished to get some contributions for the Magazine from the Rev. Edward Johnson, and in writing to him he not only asked him for contributions, but he invited him to pay a visit

to Templeogue. He addressed this letter to G. P. R. James, and James answered to the call. Lever saw no way out of the difficulty except to arrange with the prodigious romancist[1] for a serial story.

Major Dwyer recalls another dinner-party at Templeogue,[2] the guests being himself, G. P. R. James, Captain Siborne, and Dr Anster. James took the lead in the conversation, discussing, with an air of authority, horsemanship and military tactics. He entangled his host in the equestrian discussion, and Lever proved to be more than a match for him, for he had a genuine knowledge of horses, and though he was not a correct or a graceful rider,[3] he knew all the points of a horse, and could, according to Major Dwyer, "knock as much out of the veriest screw" as any man he had ever known. The author of a hundred and eighty-nine volumes was not a bad judge of horseflesh, but his ideas of warfare

[1] G. P. R. James is said to have been the author of one hundred and eighty-nine volumes. He was "Historiographer to Great Britain" during the reign of William IV. Subsequently he entered the consular service. He was at Carlsruhe in 1846 when Lever was visiting the Grand Duchy of Baden, and he was British Consul at Richmond from 1852 to 1858, and at Venice from 1858 until his death, in 1860.—E. D.

[2] "Reminiscences of Lever and Thackeray," by Major D——. From "The Portfolio" (Appendix to 'Life of Lever,' by Dr Fitzpatrick).

[3] He galloped his horse on the hardest road, says one authority. Though the boldest of riders, says another, he had a loose rolling seat. Yet another authority declares that in riding his face wore an expression of the utmost enjoyment. Even on horseback he dressed himself almost as negligently as if he were in his "snuggery," displaying a wide expanse of shirt-front, the lowest button on his waistcoat being the only one in its button-hole.—E. D.

were developed from his inner consciousness, and Dwyer recognised some of the military theories which James had expounded at Lever's dinner-table in a novel entitled 'Arrah Neil' (which ran through 'The Dublin University' in 1844—doubtless the serial which was commissioned in order to cover a blunder), "where a highly scientific imaginary battle is fought in a corner of a field leading to a ford."

The Major tells an anecdote of another dinner-party—one at the house of Remy Sheehan, a well-known Dublin journalist of the period. Sheehan was the leading member of the staff of 'The Evening Mail'[1] (to which paper Lever was an occasional contributor). In the hall of Sheehan's house were certain wooden figures partly clad in armour. The lady whom Lever took in to dinner asked him if he could tell her who the wooden figures were intended to represent. "They are the staff of 'The Mail,'" replied the humourist.

Before he had got halfway through 'The O'Donoghue' its light-hearted author grew weary: he feared he was becoming too serious. He appealed to his publisher for advice, asking him how he would prefer to have the story: was he to wind it up amid the lightning and thunder which scattered the French fleet in Bantry Bay? or was he to end it "in Colburn-and-Bentley fashion, with love and marriage licences?" He

[1] Sheridan Le Fanu subsequently owned and edited this journal. —E. D.

considered that the scheme of the story required a tragic ending. M'Glashan objected to tragedy — "the ladies wouldn't like it," — and Lever at last consented to make a more or less happy ending to his 'Tale of Ireland, Fifty Years Ago.'

When 'The O'Donoghue' was completed, Lever wrote a short novel which he entitled 'St Patrick's Eve.' He dedicated this book to his children. Being aware that his relations with the Magazine (and consequently with the publishers of his books) were none too pleasant, Mr Pearce volunteered to take the manuscript of 'St Patrick's Eve' to London. He went straight to Chapman & Hall, and read the greater portion of the story to the brothers Chapman, who promptly purchased it.[1] Mr Pearce is under the impression that at the same time he made an agreement on Lever's behalf with the Chapmans for a new novel—'The Knight of Gwynne.'

The year 1844 furnished Lorrequer with another challenge from a testy man of letters. In the January number of his Magazine a memoir of Dr Maginn appeared. It was written by Dr Kenealy. The article was of considerable length, and Lever informed his publishers that eighteen persons, ranging from the Duke of Wellington to Sam Lover, were insulted, and that there were at least four distinct libels in the memoir.

[1] 'St Patrick's Eve' was illustrated by Phiz. Chapman & Hall paid the author £200 on account to cover royalties on the sale of 5000 copies.—E. D.

Lever cut out most of the matter which he considered to be offensive or dangerous, and the result was that Dr Kenealy sent his editor a challenge. But the matter was somehow arranged without a hostile meeting.

Lorrequer was growing heartily weary of editorial worries. Throughout his career he suffered from hyper-sensitiveness, — the complaint stuck to him in every clime as persistently as his gouty attacks. While he held the reins at the office of 'The Dublin University,' Ireland was in an acutely nervous condition. O'Connell was struggling for repeal of the Act of Union; the Young Irelanders were urging the people to adopt methods more drastic than O'Connell would countenance; the political sect to which Lever belonged was antagonistic to O'Connell and to the Young Irelanders. Party feeling ran high, party rancour flourished, and many a hard blow was struck. William Carleton fell foul of Lever at an early stage, and attacked him at every opportunity. 'The Nation'—that unique Irish paper, founded in 1842 — published in 1843 an article about the editor of 'The Dublin University,' accusing him of every literary vice. This article was written by Carleton, who lived in a glass house, but was not afraid to hurl stones at his brother novelist. It became the fashion for every Dublin print which was not of the same way of thinking, politically, as Lever, to abuse him. He complains, early in 1845, of being racked by annoyances from every quarter, "sick of falsehood,

pretension, bad faith, covert insolence, senile flattery." He thought Ireland would have welcomed him with open arms, and would have encouraged him to reside in it, and the incense that was offered to him, he says bitterly, was misrepresentation and abuse. He did not make sufficient allowance for the intense acerbity which distinguishes political bickerings. He speaks also of "vile headaches not leaving him night or day for months." He was plainly the victim of overwork. Five novels and numerous short papers had been written in less than three years, and during these years the editorship of 'The Dublin University' used up a considerable portion of his time, and played havoc with his nerves.

He made up his mind to bid good-bye to Templeogue,—"to seek out a tranquil place in a foreign land," he writes, "and to work away among my children"; and in February 1845 he set out once more for Brussels, Mr Pearce accompanying him.

It was whispered at the time of his departure that he was in serious money difficulties, but two of his intimate friends, Judge Longfield and Major Dwyer, vouch that when leaving Ireland he left no debt behind him. Lever's own statement to Canon Hayman was that Dublin people were telling one another he was about to take "French leave." "The truth is," he continued, "I came to Dublin so poor a man that I cannot be much poorer leaving it. But no one suffers by my poverty, except me and mine." Though he ceased to be the editor of 'The Dublin University' he did

not sever his connection with the Magazine until a much later period.[1]

And here, as we see the last of Charles Lever as a resident on Irish soil, it may be suggested that it has been the fashion to contemplate his novels which have Irishmen for their heroes—'Harry Lorrequer' being rather a series of stories of desultory adventures than an ordinary novel—from points of view which indicate some obliquity or narrowness of vision. In Great Britain Lever is recognised merely as the humorsome delineator of the rollicking, mule-cart-topping, bullet-proof dragoon: in Ireland he is regarded by a considerable section of his countrymen as a farce-writer, or else as that abomination, the Anti-Irish Irishman.[2] Many of his critics—English, Irish, American—assert that his sketches of Hibernian life are hopelessly out of drawing, that his gross exaggeration smudges the picture. William Carleton went so far as to accuse him of deliberately giving to the public "disgusting and debasing caricatures" of Irish life and character. This class of criticism is born either of ignorance or of jealousy or of crassness. Any one who will take

[1] The average circulation of the Magazine (which, it must be remembered, was published at half-a-crown) was 4000 during Lever's editorship. The circulation gradually fell away, and early in the 'Eighties the periodical died.—E. D.

[2] Some of his Irish traducers—meaning to be scornful—speak of him as an Englishman, and imply that he was unable to view men and affairs with an Irish eye. Thomas Davis, like Lever, was the son of an English father and of a mother who was of Cromwellian-Irish stock, yet no Irishman dreams of referring to Davis as "a foreigner."—E. D.

the trouble to make himself acquainted with the chronicles of social life of the periods described by Lever will find that there is little exaggeration in his pictures. Of Irish peasant life he did not possess that intimate knowledge—it can be acquired only through actual experience—that Carleton possessed; but in none of Lever's books is there to be found anything bordering on disgusting and debasing caricatures of the peasantry. One of his later Irish critics goes so far in another direction as to insist that Lever "represents the native virtues of the Irish so delicately and justly that no Englishman is suffered to scoff at the poverty or ignorance of the people." The same critic continues: "Irish novelists are blamable for much of the reproach cast upon Ireland in other countries. But Lever is not chargeable either with caricature or concealment. Whenever he has to deal with the good qualities of a race much maligned, he shows that he is engaged upon a labour of love." And his Irish gentleman *is* a gentleman. If any class of Irishmen has a right to complain of unfair treatment at the hands of Harry Lorrequer, that class is the priesthood: but this applies only to his very early books,—and Father Tom Loftus atones for much.

The English novel-reader in the lump cares less than nothing for Lever's most valuable opinions and sketches of current political and social life, or for his admirable pictures of a bygone time in the Emerald Isle,—he is anxious to "cut the cackle and get to the 'osses." Many an Irish reader

professes to hold the belief that because Lever occasionally treads upon a pet corn he was impregnated with a savage desire to stamp violently on the foot of the patriot, eager to offer him a jibe or a sneer in lieu of an apology. Irishmen—if an Irishman may say it—are too ready to take offence at having their foibles laughed at. Race-feeling has much to do with this sensitiveness: circumstances more. The prosperous Briton can afford to enjoy banter. He says to himself, "He laughs best who laughs last"; and he is confident he is going to have the last laugh against somebody else. The mere Irishman resents having fun poked at him. He prefers, or pretends to prefer, unstinted praise to a reasonable mixture of praise, blame, and sarcasm; he knows that in his inmost breast he harbours the quality of merciless self-criticism. He does not desire laudation for the comfort of his inner self, but for blazonry—for the eye of the world outside his beloved island. Lever made no attempt to pander to this idiosyncrasy—like Don John, he laughed when he was merry and clawed no man in his humour; but whether he laughed at or with his country or his fellow-countrymen, there was no bitterness or spitefulness in his mirth. Whatsoever his political opinions, his sympathies were as Irish as the Wicklow hills, and his kindly heart could not foster malice: even for his relentless enemy, the gout, he could always find a pleasant word.

VII.

BRUSSELS—BONN—CARLSRUHE.

1845–1846.

Although he left Ireland in pique, and although he gave his friends the impression that he was leaving it for ever, it is doubtful if Lever had arrived at any definite decision concerning his future movements when he set out from Templeogue. It may be judged from the letter which he wrote to Spencer upon his arrival in Brussels that he had at the back of his mind an idea of returning, after a brief period of exile, to his native country.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Brussels, *Feb.* 28, 1845.

"On my way through London I made certain publishing arrangements which can be fulfilled either by a residence abroad or in Ireland; and it is a matter of grave debate with what to decide upon. Meanwhile, I should like the power to resume my tenure of Templeogue, and would be greatly gratified if you could make such an

arrangement with Gogarty[1] that I could hold on till the end of June or July on payment of a certain sum (say £50), and in the event of returning continue my tenancy as before. Should Gogarty make any arrangement to this purpose, pray then communicate with Bennett the auctioneer, and do not let him sell the oak or anything else, save the old lace given to him by my wife. If there be a great difficulty with Gogarty, I should rather retain the house and let it for the season in the event of my not returning. The other alternative of being turned out of a place which suits me so well [? is hateful].

"We have, *malgré* two stormy nights at sea, [? progressed] admirably. The children are in great health and spirits, and enjoying their old haunts here in perfect ecstasies.

"The weather here is cold beyond anything. Snow and ice everywhere. Stoves and fur coats are able for it, however, and the elasticity of the air is actual champagne after the muddy small beer of a Dublin day."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Hôtel Britannique, Brussels, *March* 22, 1845.

"I am regularly installed here in capital quarters at the Hôtel Britannique, with every comfort in the midst of much attentions and civilities on all sides. The Rhine is frozen and the highroads ten or twelve feet deep in snow, so that further travelling

[1] The landlord of Templeogue House.

is for the present out of the question, nor do I much regret it. We are well housed, fed, and entertained—away from the worry of Curry & Co., and at least enjoying tranquillity—if not deriving other benefits. . . .

"There has been great delay about my book, 'St Patrick's Eve,' but I hope by the time this reaches you, you will have received a copy. I am anxious you should like it, because, apart from any literary [?vanity], I have taken the opportunity of saying my *mot sur l'Irelande* which, whether unfounded or true, is at least sincere."

Pleasantly situated and infected with the gaiety of life in a Continental capital, Lever quickly forgot his editorial worries. The calumnies, the neglect, and the hard knocks which he had suffered at the hands of political and journalistic opponents in Ireland were forgotten or forgiven, and doubtless it was while he was enjoying this charitable and happy frame of mind that he penned his "Word at Parting," which was printed in the August number of 'The Dublin University.' (A publisher's note accompanied the "Word," explaining that it should have appeared in the issue for July.) He proclaims: "I abdicate at goodwill with all my fellow-labourers, and for reasons so purely personal that I feel it would be an act of egotism to obtrude them on public notice." Then he goes on to say that he would have left the stage in silence,—there was not infrequently a hint of the theatre about his sayings and do-

ings,—if he did not consider that his silence might be regarded as an act of ingratitude to a public who had contributed so much to his happiness, and who were so dear to his memory.

To the Rev. John Lever.

"BRUSSELS, *May* 18, 1845.

"Etienne [or Steeni] has just arrived safely with all his menagerie in good condition,—not even a scratch on the horses,—and his newly-bought phaeton [? is] a perfect bijou, and when harnessed with my two new ponies, a perfect park equipage, and already the envy of Belgium and the Belgians.

"Will you think me a very shabby fellow if I ask you to give me back a gift? I would not make the request for myself or mine, but I am differently circumstanced at this moment. Sir Hamilton Seymour, whose kindness to me is hourly and increasing, has asked me to initiate him into the art or mystery of equestrianising his nursery, and even gone so far as to beg me to get him a pony. Will you give me Prince for him? I would not, as I have said, ask him for myself, but there are obligations which really weary by repetition, and I, who have not found too many such friends in the world, begin to feel a kind of depression at being the recipient of bounties. Pray, then, forgive me, and don't think me the meanest fellow in the world.

"If I am not asking more than I dare, will you send the beastie to Dublin and have him shipped—

Saturday morning—by *long sea* for London, where Mr Pearce will meet him on landing, and take care of him. I am ashamed (I cannot say more or less) of all this, but I own to you I feel I am on safe ground that you will not judge me unfairly or harshly. 'I'm in a dead fix, and that's a fact,' as the Yankees say. It is rather of consequence that he should be sent off by the Saturday's Dublin Packet, because the Antwerp boat leaves London on Thursday morning, and if the pony were not despatched by that day he should stay a week in London. Smith, the gardener at Templeogue, would assist in getting him comfortably installed by giving one of the sailors 10s. to mind him during the voyage. He could be cared for—hay and bran being of course provided. . . .

"I shall write a line to Saunders by this post to assist so far as regards payment of various expenses, land and sea. The beastie should be well muffled up against cold.

"I have only one word to add. If all this be impracticable, difficult, or impossible, get Dycer to buy me the smallest, roughest, most shelty, 'Princely' pony that can be had. I don't care if he costs a little more than a horse-fancier would say was his value. £10 or £15 I'll give if necessary."

After a pleasant experience of entertaining and of being entertained in Brussels, after a round of visits to salons and to picture-galleries, excursions to Waterloo and elsewhere, Lever decided to set out upon a tour through Belgium and up the

Rhine. He was accompanied by the full strength of his household, and about the middle of June he bade good-bye once more to Brussels.

His first halting-place of importance was Bonn.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Hôtel Bellevue, Bonn, *June* 24, 1845.

"I have certainly the gift of what the French call the *mémoire de l'escalier*, or the faculty of remembering on the stairs what should have been said in the drawing-room. . . .

"I am gaining in health and spirits and losing in flesh and depression, wellnigh down to 12 stone (*vice* 14½), and I can exercise from morning till night without feeling the slightest fatigue, and eat of everything most sour, greasy, and German, and never know the penalty of indigestion. For the three years I passed in Ireland I had not as many days of health as I have already enjoyed here. This, though very favourable to comfort, seems little conducive to hard labour, for I cannot write a line, and really do nothing save amuse myself from morning till night. The temptations are strong: we have the Rhine and the mountains beside us, and, as we are all mounted, we pass the days on horseback or on the water. We dine at one! and so have a very long evening. . . . Let me hear how you like No. 7 [The] O'D[onoghue] when you read it."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"CARLSRUHE (or BONN), *July* 25, 1845.

" . . . My mind is at ease by thinking that I owe nothing to or in Ireland save my affection for John[1] and yourself. . . .

"My friend James has been spending a week with me here."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"CARLSRUHE, *Aug.* 10, 1845.

"Your letter followed me here from Bonn, from which delightful little sojourn a royal visit and a musical festival had driven me,—Queen Victoria and Beethoven, with the due accompaniment of bonfires, blue lights, and bassoons, being too much for my common nerves. Here we are for the present, located, as the Yankees say, in the stillest, quietest, most fast-asleep of all German cities, regularly, even beautifully, built,—with a Grand Duke and a Ministry and a *corps diplomatique*, but all seemingly mesmerised into a dreamy lethargy, in which all speech or motion is excluded. We had some thoughts of passing a winter here, but though it would suit my pocket well, my impatience and restlessness could scarcely stand the sluggish tranquillity. . . . I am unable to say where we shall pass the winter. There was some thought of Lausanne, but all Switzerland is dear, and our party is a large one—ten souls and five quadrupeds."

[1] His brother.

In sleepy Carlsruhe he received two letters which disturbed him considerably,—one causing him the gravest annoyance and anxiety, the other affording him intense and justifiable joy.

The unpleasant communication was from Curry & Co. It took the form of a statement of account between publisher and author, and showed that the latter was heavily indebted to the former. Lever wrote to his *fidus Achates* in Dublin, expressing his goodwill for Curry & Co., who had hitherto treated him fairly. He declared that he had no desire to quarrel with them. "I detest," he wrote, "the hackneyed fightings of bookseller and author,"—but he denied emphatically that he owed the money claimed by Curry.

The pleasant letter was from Miss Edgeworth. He had written to her twice from Templeogue, inquiring if he might dedicate to her 'Tom Burke of Ours.' Miss Edgeworth replied tardily. In the course of her welcome letter, the author of 'Castle Rackrent' spoke of having read aloud to her nephews and nieces 'The O'Donoghue,' which was appearing in monthly parts,—an announcement which afforded the author of 'The O'Donoghue' a thrill of delight, animated him with high hopes, and filled him with fresh ambitions. To Spencer he wrote: "I hope John told you—I'd rather he had than I—of a letter Miss Edgeworth wrote to me about 'O'Donoghue.' I never felt so proud in my life as in reading it. There is, independent of all flattering, so much of true criticism, so much of instructive guidance, that for the first time I

begin to feel myself able to take advice with advantage, and to hope that I have stuff in me for something like real success. What a prerogative true genius possesses when it can compensate by one word of praise for neglect and calumny! So do I feel that Miss Edgeworth has repaid me for all the bitterness and injustice of my Irish critics. I never made such an effort as in this book. I hope sincerely that you may think I have not failed, for with all my reliance on your friendship, I feel *your* criticism will be as free from prejudice as so warm and affectionate a friend's can be."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"BADEN-BADEN, *Sept.* 8, 1845.

"Your kind and satisfactory letter reached me here, where we have been sojourning in one of the sweetest valleys in the world,—a perfect wilderness of vineyards and olives, traversed by innumerable streams, and inhabited by a happy people. This day twelvemonth we were at Achill in the midst of dire poverty, when the very waves that thundered along the seashore were less stormy than the passions of man beside them. And yet in one case the law of the land is Despotism, and in the other there are the blessings (!) of the English constitution. So much have political privileges to do with human happiness. In my own narrow experience, I should say that the most contented communities are those that know not how they are governed.

. . . . . .

"As to my reserve fund, my intention is this—calculating loosely. That between Daily (?), Clarence Street, and the Templeogue furniture, something like £250 may result, which with the £350 already in bank will make £600 (John's £100 added). I will myself lay by £300 more to make up £1000, the interest of which will meet one of the small nuisances, and thus make a beginning—whether to end in anything more or not [? who can say], for I am most unhappily gifted in the organ of secretiveness. M'Glashan is far more eager to purchase my contingent copyright than he lets it be known. I am well aware that such has been a long time since a favourite object with him, but he's a thorough fox, and likes to be pushed on to his own inclinations.

"I have been fearfully walked into by that firm, but for many reasons would rather bear it all now than make what the Duke calls 'a little war.'

"If the fine weather continues—it is glorious now—we shall spend the month of October here, as by far the pleasantest spot I've set upon, and then return to Carlsruhe for the winter. I'll endeavour to pick up an Irishman as a witness to the deeds and send them back at once."

In Baden he spent a couple of pleasant months, though it is hinted that he lost heavily at the gaming-tables there. An anecdote of these Baden days is told by him. At a public dance an English lady of rank had declined many offers of partners, not deeming any of the gentlemen good

enough for her. At length she was attracted by a handsome well-dressed German who spoke English fluently. He made himself so agreeable to the fine lady that she accepted his invitation to dance. She inquired who he was, and was informed that he was the Oberkellner at the Gasthaus von Rose. Under the impression that this meant that the favoured gentleman occupied a high official position, the lady danced boldly with him throughout the remainder of the night. When she consulted her dictionary next morning she was horrified to discover that "Oberkellner" was "head-waiter"!

Lever was now fit for work again, and he sketched out the plan of a new novel which he proposed to call 'Corrig O'Neill.' He sent this sketch to his literary counsellor, Mortimer O'Sullivan, instructing him to show it to M'Glashan. This novel was never written, but some of the material was used by the author later for 'The Daltons.' It was possibly his ill-luck at roulette, and a desire for quietness and retrenchment, which drove him back in October to drowsy Carlsruhe. He set earnestly to work at a new story, 'The Knight of Gwynne.' He forwarded the early chapters to his brother John.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Stephanie Strasse, Carlsruhe, *Nov.* 16, 1845.

"Has John sent you—if not, get it—the opening chapter of my new tale, 'The Knight of Gwynne'? I hope you may like it. I have a great object in

view—no less than to show that the bribed men of the Irish Parliament are the very men who now are joining the Liberal ranks, and want to assist O'Connell in bringing back the Parliament they once sold, and would sell again if occasion offered. Of course, a story with love and murder is the vehicle for such a dose of 'bitters.'

"Will you also ask John to write half a dozen lines to M. O'Sullivan, requesting him to forward to your care a MS. of mine which John sent him, and which I would beg you to keep (and read if you like) for me? It was my originally intended story before I began my 'Knight of Gwynne.'"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"CARLSRUHE: dated *Jan.* 7, 1846 (at top), and *Dec.* 6, 1846 (at foot).

"Being at that time of the year when one's creditors change their outward form and become duns, I am obliged to see where I can find anything available to meet them. I perceive in a letter of yours the remark that no a/c of sales of 'Hinton' has been rendered by the Currys for the past year—*i.e.*, since October 1844, and in a letter from M'Glashan that my share of Indian profits amounts to £52, 10s., I think. Would you see after these small sums for me, as I am really worried and vexed by the rascality of Orr and M'Glashan, who have cheated me in the most outrageous fashion on two small works—'Nuts' and 'Trains'—I gave them for publication? M. O'Sullivan writes me that under John's advice

and sanction he gave my MS. of 'Corrig O'Neill' to M'Glashan to 'look at,' he, M'G., having applied to him for this. I desired no further dealings or doings with that d——d Scotchman, and well he knows it, for while asking to see my MS. he was in possession of a letter from me telling him I should have no further dealings with him.

"I find that my expenses are overwhelmingly great here. Wasteful habits dog me wherever I go, and I am obliged to think twice how I shall get through the year. I suppose Gogarty takes Templeogue at once. Is there any use of reminding him of his pledge to repurchase the furniture at the price I paid,—he gave his word of honour (! ! !) to do so?

"If the settlement about 'Hinton' and the Indian copyright should not be easily effected now, let the matter lie over to meet the Insurances, only take measures to have the money forthcoming then, for I know well I'll not have sixpence to spare the whole year through. I hear (confidentially) that Remy[1] is about to review me again in 'The Mail.' He be d——d! I've outlived such beggarly support. Is there an opinion of the 'K. of Gwynne' stirring in Dublin? My London accts. all so far satisfactory."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"CARLSRUHE, *Jan.* 19, 1846.

"I have been expecting somewhat anxiously to have heard from you or M'G. relative to my late

[1] Mr Remy Sheehan.—E. D.

proposition, but suppose that the crafty Highlander has preferred to lie by in the hope that I would reply to a late communication of his which, in terms of great affected cordiality, asks for a renewal of our dealings together. To this I have not made, nor shall I make, any answer, nor will I write to him until he definitely says something in answer to my application for the sale of my copyrights.

"Yesterday my plate and linen arrived here quite safe. The books, I have just learned, are at Dusseldorf, where, the Rhine being now frozen, they must remain.

"You have before this read 'The Knight.' I hope your good opinion continues unabated. Are there any critiques in the Irish papers? 'The Mail,' I hear, will notice me now. Perhaps the Repealers think they have found a backer. Let them hug the belief till the 4th No., and I shall clear away the delusions.

"I have hints of a deep intrigue on the M'Glashan side to injure any dealings I may have with the London publishers. I am greatly provoked at M'Glashan being suffered to see my MS. of 'Corrig O'Neill.' It was a false move, and will [? inconvenience] me very considerably. He affected a half permission on my part which never was asked nor ever alluded to."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Carlsruhe, *Jan.* 26, 1846.

"I think you over-estimate the value of the copyrights, and would gladly take £200 per vol.,—

that is, £800 for 'Hinton,' 'Burke,' and 'The O'Donoghue'; but if the Currys are likely to make a proposal, it is best to wait patiently. For although your calculation is perfectly correct as to proportion, 'Hinton' was a more than usually successful book, and too favourable to form a standard to measure others by. 'O'D.' will, however, I am given to believe, eventually rival it.

"I yesterday received a long and confidential letter from Lord Douro. The split in the Cabinet was not all on corn. The Duke wanted to give up the commandership-in-chief, and the Queen, *folle de son mari*, actually insisted on Prince Albert succeeding him,—an appointment which, if made, would outrage the service and insult the whole nation. To avoid such a *coup* the Duke was induced to hold on and save us—for the present, at least—from such a humiliation. As to the announcements in 'The Times,' and the disclosure of Cabinet secrets, the story is rather amusing. Lord Douro says, 'If my father's beard only heard him mutter in his sleep, he'd shave at bedtime.' But Sidney Herbert is more in love and less discreet, for he actually told Mrs Norton what had occurred at the Council, and *she* sold the information to 'The Times' for a very large sum![1] Even in Virgil he might have read a nice lesson on this head,—but I suppose his classical readings were more of Ovid latterly. Corn is doomed, and the Irish Church to be doomed—not now, but later. The

[1] This story is now discredited, and was formally denied by Lord Dufferin.

League have secured four counties and several boroughs. As to war: the Duke says he could smash the Yankees, and ought to do so while France is in her present humour, — and Mexico opens the road to invasion in the South—not to speak of the terrible threat which Napier uttered, that with two regiments of infantry and a field battery he'd raise the Slave population in the Southern States.

. . . . . .

"The remark you heard at Curry's about my Repealism is no new thing. M'G. tried to fasten the imputation upon me when I sold 'St Patrick's Eve' to the London publishers, and the attempt to revive it displays his game. A very brief hint would make the Repeal editors adopt it for present gain and future attack when they discovered their error. However, the deception will not be long-lived, and I think on the appearance of No. 4 few will repeat the charge.

"Wilson (of Blackwood's) has written me a long letter of such encouragement that, even bating its flattery, makes me stout-hearted against small critics and their barkings, and I am emboldened to hope that I am improving as a writer. One thing I can answer for,—no popularity I ever had, or shall have, will make me trifle with the public by fast writing and careless composition. Dickens's last book[1] has set the gravestone on his fame, and the warning shall not be thrown away."

[1] 'Dombey and Son.'

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"CARLSRUHE, *March* 5, 1846.

"I hope you continue to like my 'Knight,' of which I receive favourable opinions from the press and the publishers. I am told it is better writing and better comedy than anything I have done yet. Pray let me have your judgment—not sparingly, but in all candour.

"I sent a little article to M'Glashan about Fairy Tales, and he writes to me as if the paper was a review. I have not written, expecting a second advice from him containing a proof, but meanwhile would you scratch him a line addressed to D'Olier Street, saying I have received his note, and will correct the proof with pleasure, but that the paper[1] is not a review of any one, and that the two first tales are Danish,—the last is my own. Would you also ascertain if he is disposed to entertain his own project of my continuing 'Continental Gossipings' for the Magazine, and subsequently publishing them in one or two vols., and if he would make any proposal as to terms? This latter I would rather not mention in a note, but as a subject of chatting whenever occasion offered.

"The weather here has been like July, and the Rhine is like crystal. We have large bouquets of spring flowers on the dinner-table every day, and the buds are bursting forth everywhere. We

[1] The contribution was entitled "Children and Children's Stories, by Hans Daumling." It is interesting to note that the first two tales were "The Little Tin Soldier" and "The Ugly Duck." Lever's own fairy tale was entitled "The Fête of the Flowers."—E. D.

shall in a few weeks more resume our wanderings. Meanwhile I must press forward with my 'Knight,' which for some weeks I have shelved entirely."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"STEPHANIE STRASSE, CARLSRUHE,
March 29, 1846.

"I am working away at my 'Knight,' and have in the 7th No. got him into as pleasant a mess of misfortunes as any gentleman (outside a novel) ever saw himself involved in. I hear excellent accounts of his progress in England, and have destined him to a long life—twenty numbers. This at the publisher's request rather than of my own convictions,—though I need scarcely say, to my great convenience . . . Let me hear your *mot* of No. 4, which I think is the best of the batch."

Carlsruhe at first was a seductive place, "where life glided on peaceably, and the current had neither ripple nor eddy." It had no riotous pleasures; it was equally free from the things that annoy—no malignant newspapers, no malevolent enemies, no treacherous or patronising friends. He had a good house, a first-rate *chef*, six horses, and plenty of society,—a *corps diplomatique* of pleasant folk and their wives; cheerful reunions every evening; sometimes a dinner at the Grand Duke's Court. There were no professional beauties, no geniuses, no bores. G. P. R. James and himself were the cynosure of all eyes, and there were whist-parties every night.

In this elysium it was no wonder that his spirits were elevated, and that he worked with a will. The only rifts within the lute were the difficulty of disposing satisfactorily of his interest in Templeogue House and his disputations with Curry and M'Glashan.

Suddenly the sleepy paradise changed into a sleepy and contemptible *inferno*. There was no revolution, no change in the Grand Ducal system, nobody in Carlsruhe became any better or worse, nobody was any wiser or more foolish,—but the Grand Ducal city is described as a "pettifogging little place, with a little court, a little army, a little aristocracy, a little *bourgeoisie*, a little diplomatic circle, little shops, and very little money." In compensation for these littlenesses there was a flood of gossip and "any amount of etiquette." The people of the Grand Duchy had no commerce, no manufactories, no arts, no science,—no interests, in fact, save in the small ceremonial life of the court, no amusements except soirees held in ill-lighted rooms, where an ill-dressed company talked scandal, military slang, and cookery—how to dress a corporal or a cutlet. From this "dreary atmosphere of local sewers, stale tobacco-smoke, and sour cabbage," he was glad to escape.

Major Dwyer attempts to account for the changed aspect of Carlsruhe. He describes Lever as being too fond of display and too outspoken. It was his habit to gallop through the quiet streets with his wife and children, all attired in very showy habiliments. The ponderosity and solemnity of

the little court occasionally tickled him, and he laughed openly. Court etiquette, too, was a source of amusement, and he violated its rules in a manner which horrified the stolid courtiers. Upon one occasion he invited to a whist-party at his house the Hof Marschall (or Lord Chamberlain), Kotzebue, Secretary to the Russian Embassy, and some other notabilities. The Hof Marschall —doubtless acting upon the same impulses which had actuated Archbishop Whately when he absented himself from the dinner-party at Temple-ogue—did not arrive, and, worse still, sent no apology. Lever was very angry, and he made some outrageous verbal jokes at the expense of Grand Dukes, Hof Marschalls, and Gross Herzogs. The upshot of the matter was that the Irish novelist found Carlsruhe "too hot to hold him"; so (still accompanied by his "menagerie") he bade good-bye to G. P. R. James and to the Grand Duchy of Baden-Baden, and, travelling somewhat in gipsy fashion through the Black Forest, he reached the borders of Tyrol in the month of May 1846.

VIII.

IN TYROL.

1846–1847.

When he quitted Carlsruhe it was Lever's intention to make his way by easy stages to Italy. His *modus operandi* was to pack himself and his family into a large coach, and to drive wherever his wayward fancy led him. He tried to comfort himself with the assurance that this insouciant method of journeying was economical as well as being of advantage to him. He ascertained later that the average cost of these economical migrations was about £10 a-day.

In May the party, which included Mr Stephen Pearce, arrived at Bregenz, on the Lake of Constance, and from the window of an inn Lever beheld the distant prospect of a castle which fascinated him. He ascertained that the *schloss* belonged to Baron Pöllnitz, and that the Baron was willing to let it. Mr Pearce conducted the negotiations. The lord of the Reider Schloss was Chamberlain to the reigning Grand Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha—Lever seems to have been destined

to forgather with Grand Dukes, — and he was obliged to resume his duties at Court.

On the 26th May Mr Pearce despatched a letter from Riedenburg, Bregenz, to Alexander Spencer.

"My dear Sir,—On our way to Italy we stopped suddenly short at the foot of the Alps, and got ourselves housed in a handsome Gothic castle in the midst of beautiful scenery. In all the fracas of a new habitation — luggage arriving, strange servants, &c.—Lever has told me to acknowledge your letter, which has followed from Carlsruhe, containing Dr [afterwards Judge] Longfield's opinion on the Curry affair. This opinion seems in every respect to bear out Lever's own previous convictions, and to sustain the view he took of his contract. In one point only does he deem Dr L.'s suggestion inapplicable—that is, as respecting the purchase of the unsold copies. This Lever neither could nor would undertake. The principal question is the determining of the right of half profits on an invariable standard, that standard being already established in the account furnished. . . . The arrangement Lever wishes being the acknowledgment by Curry of half profits on the scale already conceded, and the consent not to make future sales at an inferior rate without Lever's agreement thereto. . . .

"Our present habitation is most beautifully situated, the Lake of Constance being on one side of the house and the mountains on the other, Mt. Sentis rising to the height of nearly 8000

feet. This, of course, and the whole range, capped with snow, taking the most beautiful tints at the rising and the setting of the sun."

Lever was soon busy entertaining. One of his earliest guests was his friend Major Dwyer. Towards the end of July he had a visit from his new publisher, Mr Edward Chapman (of Chapman & Hall). In August he resumed his correspondence with Dublin.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Riedenburg, *Aug.* 5, 1846.

"With a houseful of company and every imaginable kind of confusion around me, I have barely time for a few lines in reply to your last.

"Curry wrote asking what price I placed on my right to the books, and I replied demanding a full a/c of all sales up to date. My London publisher, who fortunately happened to be with me, advised me as to the course to take. . . . I shall write fully and lengthily by Mr Chapman, who leaves on Saturday for London."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Riedenburg, Bregenz, *Aug.* 15, 1846.

"My chateau continues full of company, with the visits of daily new arrivals. Baron de Margueritte, wife and daughter, one party. The Baron's sister was married to John Armit of Dublin. Dudley Perceval, son of the late Spencer Perceval; then Charles Dickens and wife, with two of the Bishop

of Exeter's family expected,—not to speak of my worthy publisher, Mr Chapman, and wife, from London, who are so pleased with their visit that, like kind folk, they have stayed three weeks with us. I like him greatly, and his wife is a remarkably good and favourable specimen of London.

"As for Curry, his letter was a mild, courteous, mock-friendly, expostulatory, but semi-defiant epistle, talking about our old and intimate business relations and the hope of their [being] one day revived, and asking me to set a price upon my interest; to which I responded by asking for the data of such a demand, a full and true statement of a/c. It seems that he offered to sell his share to C. & H., and asked them, for his moiety, £2500! while he had the insolence to offer me £200 for mine. This Chapman himself told me, and also added that his (Curry's) great anxiety was now to purchase my share, in order to bring the whole commodity into the market in a more eligible shape, as few booksellers would buy a divided copyright.

"Chapman says, on reading these letters and hearing all the case, that he never heard of any man being more shamefully treated,—that I have been outrageously rogued and robbed throughout. When the accts. come,—if they ever do,—Chapman will have them examined by their own accountant, so the great point at present would be to ask him to forward these to me as early as possible.

"My answer (to Curry) was civil but dry. No notice did I take of his hopes of future dealings nor

the half intimation that a legal case was a game *à deux*. I merely said: Let me see how I stand, and what would be a fair sum to ask [as a settlement] for the past.

"It is strange enough that M'Glashan never wrote to me since this controversy began, although I think he is in my debt a letter. I would be glad if you would take some opportunity of dropping in on him and feeling your way as to his 'dispositions,' as the French say,—whether he is friendly or the reverse. I have written this at the cost of my eyesight, which is abominably bad at night."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"RIEDENBURG, *Nov.* 2, 1846.

"There never was a bad business man assisted by a cleverer and more good-natured friend. You have perfectly satisfied all my hazy doubts as to how I stand before the world. Heaven knows, the matter ought to seem easy enough to me now! for all through my life I have never looked beyond the coming month of January,—and how to open the New Year without cumbering it with the deficiencies of the old one. . . .

"From Curry I received a half-apologetic epistle, hoping that if I would state what sum I would accept for my remaining interest, the matter might be arranged without the interference of the gentlemen of the long robe. I sent the letter on to Chapman for advice, and I have not yet received his reply. Could you conveniently see M'Glashan and sound him as to the best mode of terminating

the controversy? I am also very anxious to ascertain his feelings towards myself. . . .

"I hear that my 'Knight' (though not by any means so popular as many others) is the best I have done. I hope this is so, because it is the last. I know it is most carefully written: the dialogue has cost me great pains and labour, and the whole book has more of thought in it than its predecessors. . . . I am glad you like the 'Knight' for more reasons than flattered vanity suggests. I want you to accept of it in dedication. I hope you will receive the barren compliment, not at the poor price of such a production, but as another proof of my sincere regard and affection."

To Mr Hugh Baker.[1]

"Riedenburg, *Nov.* 10, 1846.

"I possess a contingent interest in certain books —'Tom Burke,' 'Hinton,' and 'O'Donoghue,' the former after 11,000, the latter after 10,000 copies. This interest—or, to speak more plainly, the amount of profit accruing to me—was estimated by M'G. in one of his letters to me, and I believe in a conversation with you, as such, that if the sales reached 20,000 my receipts would be doubled. The sale of 'Hinton' alone [? the a/cs] showed did exceed the limits where my profit began, and in an account furnished to me before leaving Ireland I was credited in a proportion analogous to M'G.'s pledge.

"Since that period (mark this — for here the iniquity begins) the house of Curry and Co. ef-

[1] Charles Lever's brother-in-law.

fected sales for the purpose, I believe, of raising cash to conclude the winding-up of partnership, of 1000 copies of 'Hinton' at a mere minimum profit (6d., I think, per copy), and thus at one *coup* not only reduce my profit to a mere fraction, but seriously and gravely—as I am prepared to show—damage my character and that of my books in the London market.

"And these sales made without my consent—without even my knowledge—were in the face of a scale of profit already acknowledged by their own account furnished, and specially pledged by M'G.

"The matter ends not here, for, anxious to purchase my remaining rights,—the only obstacle to selling the sole copyrights in London,—Curry had the impudence to propose £200 for the four vols. in question, urging as a reason for my compliance his own depreciated sales, and using a threat of the damage he could effect in my reputation by continuing such a system of depreciation.

"This, if related by any less credible witness than Spencer, would scarcely be believed. But the case is so. Up to the moment Spencer had been—when able—moving in the matter; but Curry, from old experience of my capacity for being duped, declined conferring with him, and addressed to me certain letters—half flattery, half insolence—in which he alleges that M'G.'s scale of my half profits was far too high, and that I have been overpaid! and lastly, that the depreciated sales were made by him in full right on his part.

"A case was submitted to Longfield for his opinion on this head (of which I enclose you the copy sent to me by Spencer). The last letter I received from Curry enclosed a statement of the expenses of getting up 'Hinton,' in which I am charged for my share of 20,000 copies—*i.e.*, 4000 more than are sold. It also contains a request to know at what price I do value my contingent interests, as Mr Curry hopes the matter may be arranged without reference to the courts of law.

"As to the scale of half profits, C. & H. set them down as £10 per 1000 Nos.—which is just what M'Glashan [? estimated]."[1]

To Mr Hugh Baker.

"Riedenburg, *Nov.* 14, 1846.

"Soon after despatching my letter to you, I received the enclosed from Mr Chapman, for whose consideration and counsel I had stated the whole transaction with Curry. You will perceive that his opinion corroborates mine, and maintains my moiety of profits as fixed and unchangeable. As to his (Chapman's) suggestion that I should ask Curry what price *he* lays upon his share of the copyrights, it is evidently to reduce him to the dilemma of avowing that he offered me far too little, and of impressing that he asks far too much. Will you see Curry and say that the severe illness of the children

[1] Lever would appear to have received £1300 on account of profits of 'Jack Hinton.'—E. D.

in succession has totally prevented my attending to business,—an excuse, I regret to say, not in the least fictitious?

"Curry did ask the trade £2500, which I fancy included stock and stereo-plates, but of this I'm not certain. I had a suspicion that if the copyrights were offered at a fair and reasonable price, Chapman & Hall might purchase,—an arrangement which would suit my views in every respect. . . .

"The affair is of greater moment to me than its mere *£ s. d.* interests,—because it may serve to consolidate a publishing connection which I would be much pleased to fix on a permanent and lasting basis."

To Mr Hugh Baker.

"Riedenburg, *Dec.* 10, 1846.

"C. & H. might purchase (the copyrights), but I have only this impression from a conversation I once held with Chapman, when he mentioned that Curry, after offering the books in the market, appeared to withdraw them—and this possibly gave rise to the suspicion of a new issue being contemplated. What C. & H. would speculate in is, I fancy, a reissue in weekly parts,[1] cheap—a 'People's Edition,' or some such blackguard epi-

Edward Chapman (according to Lever) stated in one of his letters to Bregenz that his firm's mode of dealing with Dickens was to give the author so much per 1000 copies, "not charging anything in the a/c for authorship and plates, save cost of working them off." Doubtless this refers to reprints.—E. D.

thet, being the taste of the day. Chapman told me that we might calculate on 30,000, at least, of some of the vols. . . .

"As to M'Glashan. About ten days back I received a note from Spencer which gave me so favourable an impression of his (M'G.'s) feelings towards me, that I at once wrote to him—which I have not done for the last ten months, and although I am very far from being in a writing vein or humour. If he cares for my aid, and if he can afford me such terms as will not be below my mark and *infra dig.* to work for, I'll finish the 'Continental Gossipings,' and make a 1- or 2-vol. affair of it, as may seem best. . . . I am perfectly ready to return to our old and long-continued good understanding.

. . . . . .

"I am much amused by your account of Irish affairs. There is something inherent in the national taste for rascality. I am rather well pleased that Old Dan has conquered Young Ireland. I like him, if only that he is the Old Established Blackguard.

"It is rather good fun for us here to read the London morning papers—'Times,' &c.—commenting on the Austrian business. Such a mass of lies, mistakes, and absurdities as they circulate never was heard of. First, the Gallician revolt—which 'The Times' allege was collusive on their part—was reported to the Governor eleven days before it broke out, and though he had every evidence before his eyes, being a stupid old beast

he would not credit [the news], sent the troops away, and had his rebellion for his pains. As uncle to the Emperor, Metternich could not degrade him: but he has been *invited* to Vienna, and not permitted to resume his government. There was neither collusion on the part of Austria, nor was the peasant massacre instigated by them, — so far from it, that the first movement by the Polish nobles (the greatest blackguards in Europe) was to assassinate or poison all who refused to join the conspiracy. We have beside us in the [neighbourhood] here a young Polish count who made his escape in disguise, and would certainly have been killed for refusing to join the revolt, while the Austrians would hang him if he did. As to Cracow: Austria refused twice, and it was only by Russia's ultimatum —you or I—that she consented to the annexation. No one who knows anything of Austrian politics suspects her of desiring increase of territory. It is against her interest and her stability, but Russia is not the best next-door neighbour. There are many faults in Austrian rules, but there are excellences and advantages I never beheld in more democratic governments, and whatever may be said about spies and police visits, &c. (of which, by the way, I have seen nothing myself), I cannot speak ill of a country that lets no man starve — that takes care of its sick and aged, and possesses the safest roads to travel, and the smallest calendar of crime of any population in Europe."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Riedenburg, *Jan.* 9, 1847.

"You will see by the papers that Dickens, as well as Bulwer, has fallen under the lash of 'The Times.' It matters little however; the [? love] for low verbiage and coarse pictures of unreality is a widespread—and a spreading—taste. People will buy and read what requires no effort of mean capacities to follow, and what satisfies low-bred tastes by a standard of morality to which they can, with as little difficulty, attain. I have suffered—I am suffering—from the endeavour to supply a healthier, more manly, and more English sustenance, but it may be that before I succeed—if I do succeed at all—the hand will be cold and the heart still, and that I may be only a pioneer to clear the way for the breaching party.

"That such a taste must rot of its own corruption is clear enough, but, meanwhile, literature is an unattractive career for those who would use it for a higher purpose.

"I hope you like my 'Knight'—because, while I perceive many and grave faults in its construction and development, I still would fain hope that the writing (as writing) is pure, and the tone throughout such as a gentleman might write and a lady read. If you agree with me, I shall feel that my book requires no better eulogy.

"Miss Edgeworth and O'Sullivan give me warm encouragement and high commendation; but I take it much of both proceeds from kindness of feeling,

which, perhaps, guesses with intuitive good-nature that such are as much 'bids for the future' as flatteries for the past."

To Mr Hugh Baker.

"BREGENZ, *Jan.* 22, 1847.

". . . I know Cumming has burked my 'Knight,'—not intentionally, but from the blundering of a lethargic bad habit of business, and the result has been most disheartening and unpleasant to me.

. . . . . .

"I am suffering severely from gout in the head and palpitations of the heart, and not able to write: even correcting is too much for me."

To Mr Hugh Baker.

"RIEDENBURG, *Feb.* 10, 1847.

"C. & H. wrote me that they do not contemplate the purchase, but that if I could get £600 to £800 I should be well off,—though if these sums (either of them) were to include the disputed moiety on the sale of 'Hinton,' 'the settlement is not so grand.' I think otherwise, and would be exceedingly glad to have so much out of the fire; besides, I really want the cash, as my present engagement terminates soon, and I have nothing in preparation to succeed it for the remainder of the year. . . .

"What would you say—if in the event of their (Curry) refusing me fair terms—to make this proposal: 'What will you give Mr Lever if he re-

vises the works (and they need it) for republication —adding notes, &c.? and also giving you the copyright of "O'Leary," to appear like the others?'

"This might lead to something, and the occupation of re-editing, writing mems., and prefaces, &c., would give me immediate work."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"RIEDENBURG, *Feb.* 20, 1847.

"I have often had the unpleasant office of inflicting you with my troublesome affairs, but perhaps never before has it been my lot to have such a necessity under the same sad *circumstances* I now do.

"I have just learned, as much to my amazement as my horror, that Hugh Baker has fled from his home and family owing to money embarrassments so great as to be overwhelming. What the amount may be I cannot even hazard a guess, but I suspect and believe it to be considerable.

"I neither am aware of how, when, or where he expended the large sums attributed to him, for I well knew that the family, who derived great advantage from the Institution, practised for several years past every suitable economy, so that they are in no wise to blame for this shocking calamity. Of course the upshot is that he will be dismissed the first meeting the Board may have, and it only remains to be seen if his mother, now old and infirm, can continue to hold her situation. Several years back Hugh obtained Mrs B.'s unwilling permission to sell an annuity of £100 settled upon

her,—the proceeds of which, and several hundred pounds besides in bank, he has made away with.

"No one knows anything now—whither he has fled, or what future course he purposes for himself. Meanwhile I believe the family are in circumstances so straitened—he having taken away every pound in the house—that even the most trifling assistance is called for. Will you, then, see Mrs B. or Miss Baker, and let them have £15 from me? I grieve to say I cannot do more at the moment, but my own position is one of grave anxiety. My present literary engagement ends in June. I have formed none other,—nor can I possibly, without the expense and inconvenience of a journey to London,—so that my income ceasing suddenly, and no exact or certain date of its renewal before me, I am—not unreasonably—anxious and uneasy.

"I looked to some arrangement of the disputed matter with Curry as the probable means to eke out the year, not intending to begin another serial till January 1848. This chance appears as remote as ever. C. & H. estimate at £600 to £800 the value of copyrights, for which Curry proposes £200,—this even irrespective of my claims on the score of 'Hinton' being sold without my consent, &c.

"Before leaving Ireland I paid £185 to save Hugh Baker from arrest, he averring that he had no other debts in the world. I gave him £57 more, in addition to various sums of £10 and £20 at different times during my residence in Temple-

ogue. I also, as you are aware, paid from £38 to £40 per annum since my absence, and now the utter uselessness of these—to me, a working man—dreary sacrifices has completely overwhelmed me.

"It is only just to tell so old and true a friend as you that my wife, while deeply feeling for their miseries and willing to restrict her own expenditure to any extent to relieve them, has never given me the least encouragement to take their burthen on me, and has on every occasion done her utmost to stop unreasonable expectations, or what might assume the shape of claims.

"The announcement of this misfortune has come suddenly and without warning upon us. We believed—and with fair grounds—that we had removed the difficulties arising from past imprudence, and now we are to learn that all our sacrifices only deferred the stroke. If I seem too niggard, or if, when you visit Mrs B. (and your visit will be taken as that of my oldest, truest friend), you find that this trifle is inadequate to the relief of the pressure, pray make it £5 or £10 more,—and with God's blessing I'll sit up an hour or so later for some time and pull it up.

. . . . . .

"I scarcely have heart to ask you how you like my 'Knight' since last I heard. [?These] hard rubs clash too rudely on the spirits to give any zest for the sorrows of tale-writing or reading; and the trade of fiction-weaving is never more distasteful than when its mock excitements

are placed side by side with flesh and blood afflictions. I am well weary of it!

. . . . . .

"If I could resume relations with M'G. for a serial in his Mag. on fair terms I would soon pull up the leeway, but I am at a loss to guess the Scotchman's *tactiques*."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bregenz, *March* 14, 1847.

"I am shocked by the want of common candour —common honesty—you experienced in your kind visit paid in my name. It was not true that H. B.'s [? difficulty] was temporary—far from it. He is by this time at New Orleans, and so far from any amelioration in their affairs, I sincerely believe they cannot be worse. These are sad topics and sadder confessions, but I cannot afford to be misunderstood by *you*, and neither zeal nor false shame shall prevent me from telling the truth.

"As regards our part—and it is of that I must think principally,—I believe that the best thing is, without making any definite pledges of aid, which to an income so precarious and uncertain as mine are always onerous, to contribute when and what we can; and although I know and feel all the great objections to a system which cannot check and may encourage unwarrantable expectations from us, and (I own I think now of ourselves) this plan would not have the apparent pressure of a positive debt,—if the world goes

fairly well with us we will not be less generous in this way than we should have been just in the other.

"For the present there is no need of further interference; and I never hugged the aphorism, 'Sufficient for the day,' &c., with more satisfaction.

"As to Curry. The a/cs furnished were no a/cs. On the contrary, C. & H. pronounced them, on the test of a London accountant, 'mere swindles.' . . . My hope is not to sell but to obtain some channel of purchase of the copyrights back again — in London (not C. & H., who have now begun a cheap issue of Dickens that will last some years), —and by a new and cheap edition, with notes, &c., make a better thing of it.

"I cannot say how anxiously I look to hearing from you about M'G. The whole thing has a gloomy aspect—that is, my present state of relations in Dublin and London gives me very grave alarm.

"I am glad my 'Knight' holds his ground with you. I trust I have not vulgarised the book merely by introducing low people, but I felt that mere nominal poverty could never be the full load of affliction high-born and high-minded people would experience in a fallen condition, and I was led to lay stress on the fact that altered social relations—inferior associations—are heavier evils than brown bread and weak congou.

"I knew—I felt while I wrote it, with a heart very full—that the verse of my poor father's song would touch you.

"It is strange enough that the habit of describing emotions and sentiments in fiction should have heightened to a most painful degree my own susceptibilities, so that I really am as weak as a girl, and far more unable to buffet against the rocks of life than when, as a doctor, I encountered them really and bodily. Half a dozen years may have had its share in this, but only its share. Besides, we have been living a very retired solitary life,—my only neighbours are an old Austrian general and his staff. I have therefore been doing with my thoughts what they say has deteriorated Spanish nobility—ruining them by frequent intermarriage.

"I am also fretted by a kind of vague consciousness that I have better stuff in me than I have yet shown; and though I was just as often disposed to regret as to indulge this belief, the confession will not entirely leave me, acting like a blunt spur on a lazy horse,—enough to irritate him but not to increase his speed."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Hôtel Bain, Zurich,
March 20, 1847.

"Your most welcome letter came after me here, where, in the vague pursuit of a less expensive residence, I have come, intending by reason of late events to shorten sail, not knowing what weather may be in store for us.

"M'Glashan's [? offer of] arbitration promises well, but you are quite right not to concede the acknow-

ledgment of the a/c as a preliminary. My object would be far rather to buy than to sell, but Curry asks £2500 for his interest,—nearly as much as he gave me originally. If we could induce him to make a reasonable demand, I think I could induce a publisher to treat for the books, so that I would be more disposed now simply to press the 'Hinton' settlement, which, according to the a/c you have sent me, is a complete puzzle—2000 being rated as 1000 copies (as you have yourself observed). . . . I believe M'Glashan intends fairly by me, but, from a careless remark of Hugh Baker, he fancied he was to be immediately examined before a Master in Chancery, and with native prudence [he] abstained from opening any correspondence in the conjuncture. . . . Chapman's letter will show you *his* opinion of the trickery the Currys are attempting. He—Chapman—said £800 would not be more than a fair sum for my interest,—all claims of 'Hinton' being previously settled to my satisfaction. . . . M'G.'s estimate of Chapman (Hall is since dead) is perfectly correct. They are, as indeed is every bookseller of the London trade that I have conversed with, very inferior to M'G. himself in natural acuteness and knowledge of books, book-writers, and book-readers. He is without question the very ablest man in his walk, and—now that Blackwood[1] is gone—far above Murray, Colburn, Longman, and the rest of them; and in London, and with capital, would beat them hollow."

[1] William Blackwood, founder of the firm.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Riedenburg, *April* 13, 1847.

"M'Glashan is so far fair that he says he insisted that in my share of half profits the expense counted against me should be limited to the mere paper and press-work, and not the eleventh part of the whole original cost—authorship, engraving, stereotyping, &c. Now the question is, Is this the spirit and meaning of the a/c now furnished?[1]

"Am I then credited with all my due and debited with no more than my due? I ask this because, in my ignorance of figures, I shall be little the wiser when the a/c is before me.

"I am so far of opinion that it would be well not to couple any proportion for buying or selling with the settlement of a/cs, and for this reason: that no sum Curry could be induced to give me *now* would be a fair compensation for my share of the profits of a reissue,—without which speculation in view he would never have made his present steps to obtain the sole copyrights,—and I am not in a position to repurchase the books, though if Curry would put a fair price on them I believe I could effect, through another, some arrangement on the subject. . . .

"Lastly, if Curry does not make me a suitable offer to buy or to sell, and if he intends a reissue, then comes another feature of the case worth consideration, and which would all depend on the spirit and temper he may show. What arrange-

[1] The letter enclosing Curry's a/c had not yet reached Lever. It had gone to Zurich (or *viâ* Zurich).—E. D.

ment could be made for the new edition appearing with revival prefaces, &c., by me? This, of course, is a last of all results.

"As to M'G., his letter is possibly a very candid and honest *exposé*, but I have limited myself to the observation already quoted. With regard to the Magazine he has made a proposal—*i.e.*, he has asked me to name my terms for a contribution of some length. I have done so, wishing to open sources of profit to myself by what I may term 'irresponsible labour'; for I really am tired of seeing my name before the public, and more than tired of the anxiety for success each new acknowledged book brings along with it. I scarcely suppose he will accede to my terms, which are sharp ones; but less than I have asked I cannot accept, because such would at once influence my treatment by others. I'll send him my first paper at once. . . .

"We are about to move into Italy next month. I have taken a villa—a most beautifully situated thing—on the Lake of Como, where we have been last week, having crossed the Alps in twelve feet of snow,—a journey of more adventure and danger than you can well conceive.

"I intend to remain there till November—possibly the whole winter; but if not, we shall move down to Florence or Rome. Como, independent of its beauty, of which I really had formed no conception (it is Killarney with a tropical vegetation,—the aloe, the olive, the fig, pomegranate, with the cactus and magnolia growing

wild), offers me the facility of visiting all the north of Italy by easy excursions, — Milan only four hours off, Padua, Verona, Vicenza, VENICE itself —all available. We shall have ample time to exchange some letters before I leave, and I only mention my plans now as to the reasons of my prompt reply to M'G., wishing to make up my future contract before I place the High Alps between myself and the printing-press."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"RIEDENBURG, BREGENZ, *April* 16, 1847.

"It does not signify that Curry has not kept any separate a/cs of the cost of all copies above 10,000. It is easy to make the deduction requisite to such an understanding.

"M'G. and Chapman both concur in stating that I am only to be charged with the cost price and not the eleventh part of the whole original cost—that is, I am only chargeable with paper and press-work, and not with any of the cost of author, engraver, &c. These are M'G.'s words to me in a letter of last week. Chapman's words are as follows :—

"'By their own showing they owe you £280 to the end of Aug., but you have to dispute this, on the ground that only paper and print are to go to form the cost of the volumes, whereas they charge you authorship, engravings, in fact, everything from the beginning,—making the dry cost per vol. to be 4s. and a fraction.'

"I quote these words from his letter to me

when last alluding to the transaction. So much, then, for the point on which I suppose, as M'G. has expressed his firm opinion, Curry can scarcely dissent.

"Secondly, in the account forwarded previously to me of cost of production, I was charged with my share of the expense of all the copies of 'Hinton,' 'Burke,' and 'The O'Donoghue' printed but still unsold — that is, I was made a party to the cost of producing so much stock,—of my interest in which we have not one syllable, and which, if I were to purchase to-morrow, I should be buying what I have paid the moiety of the charge of producing.

"This last feature of the affair it is, I opine, which makes Curry so eager for a final settlement,—at least, it was this *coup* which Chapman stigmatised as an atrocious piece of cheating.

"My opinion is, then, this: If Curry's a/c of the surplus 'Hinton' is fair, if he only charges me with what M'G. stipulated for and says I am responsible, and if I am not to pay for stock in which I hold a vested right, settle the a/c and let the transaction be finished.

"M'G. is quite right as to the relative advantages and disadvantages that Curry and I labour under. But it is quite clear *he* will scarcely be able to sell his share in the three works so long as mine remain unpurchased,—first, because he cannot make out a title until I give him one; and secondly, that no bookseller would like to buy hampered with my lien. I do not in the

least desire to buy or sell with Curry. 'Hinton' being once settled for, I'd rather lie patiently and wait for what may turn up.

"My proposition to Orr was this: and I would be very glad if you would communicate it to M'G., because if *he* felt disposed to become a party in the compact I should be better pleased. Perhaps you would then read for him the following:—

"To enter into an arrangement with me to repurchase from Curry all the copyrights, as well those he owns entire as those in part, and then to commence from the stereotype plates a cheap weekly issue, with Notes and Prefaces by the Author. I would myself contribute 'O'Leary'—which is entirely mine—to the new edition, and do my utmost to give the whole a new feature of interest.

"If M'G. would enter into the speculation, he, more than any other, could contribute to its success, and I would myself pledge that whatever I wrote in the way of story hereafter should be reserved for similar publication.

"I believe I have now gone through the whole matter save the expression of my never-ceasing gratitude to the friend who can devote of his few and scanty leisure hours nearly all in the cause of affectionate interest.

"The weather is again becoming wintry. Avalanches have fallen on every side of us—fifty feet of snow is lying in the Innspruck road; the mail for Italy is four days due, and even Switzerland—usually regular—is two days behind time. I

do not venture to anticipate when we may be able to cross the Alps,—certainly not under six or eight weeks if present appearances last.

"If M'G. has not replied to my last when you see him, urge him to do so, as it regards the contributing of some papers which I should like to despatch before I left this."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"RIEDENBURG, *April* 20, 1847.

"We are already busied with the stir and bustle of departure, though the time is still distant; but poor dear Germany is not a land of despatch, and to obtain a packing-box you must wait for a tree to be felled, barked, sawed, and planed, with all the vicissitudes attendant on these several processes, and the inevitable interruptions of saints' days and festivals in honour of every grand duke and grand duchess that ever were chronicled in the 'Almanac de Gotha.'

"Speed, therefore, is out of the question, and my impatience has already more than once jeopardised my character for prudence and good sense among this, the easiest-going nation that ever smoked away existence. Still, I am sorry to leave them, and feel that the exchange to Italy is, in every respect save climate, for the worse. The Germans are peaceful, good-natured, homely, honest souls, docile as dogs, and never treacherous. The Italians are falsehood incarnated,—their whole lives a long practical lie. Still, not to see the land would be a sad dis-

grace, the more as we have stood so long on the threshold — or rather at the bottom of the stairs—*i.e.*, at the foot of the Alps.

"I have written to John a long prosy narrative of our Splügen journey—which really, albeit a novelist *par métier*, I have not exaggerated."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"RIEDENBURG, *May* 10, 1847.

"Except Orr and M'G., there are no others in the trade sufficiently cognisant of the profits of my books to undertake on a grand scale a reissue; and for this reason—because I was an Irish author, printed and published and mostly sold in Ireland, branded with the nationality of blunder in type as well as errors in thought,—and the same professional reputation hangs to me still. Now Orr and M'G. hang back. The invariable answer I meet from them is: 'We are so much suspected by Curry, that from us he would not accept a fair sum, whereas from you he would be likely to be restricted in his demand, because he would thereby by implication be setting a value on what *you* might claim from *him*.'

"Finally, the very qualified success of Dickens's new and cheap issue for 1s. 1½d. (and pub. 1s. 2d.) — the greatest trial of cheapness ever made in bookselling—has shown that the profits of a new edition cannot be reckoned on till after a considerable lapse of time. When an author's popularity has lasted long enough to be more

than a passing taste, and to stand the test of a new generation of readers, then—and only then—can successive editions be regarded as profitable [? experiments].

"I have received a letter from the Custom House, Portsmouth, stating that 'a great number of your works in foreign editions (in English) pass through this Custom House, and as we received no notice of copyright subsisting thereon, we cannot prevent their entrance. We deem it only fair to let you know the fact for your information and guidance.' Now Mr Curry ought at once, through the Custom House, London, to take the requisite steps against this nuisance, which I already foresaw would be the result of the much boasted International Copyright Treaty.

"I am in a fix about Italy. I have my house at Como for June 1, but three avalanches have fallen in the Splügen, and the road will not be practicable before the middle of July, so that I have been compelled to retain my present house for three months longer,—a piece of the most ill-timed bad luck, as I never was more anxious to economise a little."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bregenz, *May* 26, 1847.

"Famine and money distress have cut off all the luxuries—of which books are the easiest to go without,—and so publishers won't make any contracts till better days arrive, and we who have no capital but our brains must live how

we can meanwhile. I am not impatient, but I will be very glad when any prospect offers of concluding something with Curry."[1]

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bregenz, *May* 31 [1847].

". . . I have formed no literary engagement for next year. My present contract concludes in July. Chapman is now winding up the a/c of the partnership, as Hall is dead; and from this cause and the great monetary crisis in England, will not, I believe, engage in any new speculation hastily,—so that I am really, for the first time, at sea. If I could have any occupation such as re-editing, &c., on hand, it would be my best mode of employing a season which can scarcely fail to be a bad one for books. If not this, I must try to get money by selling my copyrights somehow or somewhere, and wait for better days.

"M'Glashan is, I hear, in London. He is not coming this way certainly. He has been at his old game of fast-and-loose with me; but as I never trusted him, I am not deceived.

"Curry should take prompt measures against the piracy, or we shall be inundated. All the United States out of the new treaty are at work robbing and stealing from every nation.

"*P.S.*—The thermometer stands at 118 Fahrenheit at the shady side of a room, as I write."

[1] With this letter he sent a cheque for the funeral expenses of a sister-in-law.—E. D.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bregenz, *June* 9, 1847.

"Though I am without any over-confidence in what is whimiscally termed '12 honest men's award,' I would rather cry heads or tails for my right—by a lawsuit—than be bullied out of it by Curry and his secret adviser Butt, who I know is at the bottom of the whole proceedings. I once laughed at Butt's pretensions to represent the University in Parliament: some one told him so. . . .

"In M'G.'s letter to me a month ago he writes:—

"'I totally dissented from Curry's notion of these sales being made at your charge, and said that if he—Curry—did not consent to your receiving the usual sum you had hitherto received as moiety of profits, I would decline all interposition as his negotiatee.'"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bregenz, *June* 24, 1847.

"I hasten to say that the more I think of Curry and his conduct, the more I am impressed by the fear of some latent mischief. He is evidently acting under advice—Butt's, I conjecture; and if he does resist on threat of law, we have not the means of sustaining a costly suit—which, if merely requiring my presence in England, would more than counterbalance a victory, and make defeat half ruin. Before, therefore, making this last move,—if not yet too late,—I would advise your seeing M'G., and, having explained to him the

impracticability of any dealings with Curry, whose subterfuges and evasions are never-ending, ask him if he would endeavour to effect an amicable arrangement. This I must submit to at great sacrifices, if requisite, because I find (within the last few days) the increasing difficulty of any new arrangement with booksellers, who, dreading a money crisis, are awaiting better and safer days. . . .

"I have concluded an arrangement with Tauchnitz of Leipsic[1] to publish all my books in Germany,—with which Curry has nothing to do,—they (Tauchnitz) being limited to the circulation of the Continent; but I should be glad to have our affair with him (Curry) so concluded that he might not be disposed to give us any worry or inconvenience. In fact, sooner than risk a jury, I would take £300 for my interest, my debt of £300 being paid—£600 for all. M'G. values my interest at £400—at least, so Baker told me. Do not speak of my German arrangement to M'G.

"Where has M'G. been on the Continent? and what [? wickedness has he been] at? He received

[1] On May 8, 1847, Lever wrote as follows to Baron Tauchnitz about 'The Knight of Gwynne':—

". . . I am aware that the fact cannot in any way affect your views in the matter, but it is as well I should mention—what, after all, is the only test of an author's actual repute and standing in his own country—viz., the money value of his writings,—and for this same story I receive a sum little short of £3000. I then may safely leave to your consideration the scale on which it should be estimated by you."

On July 21 he wrote: "You ask about the portrait annexed to 'Jack Hinton.' It is not—at least so say my friends—a resemblance, and I can myself assure you that *I* do not squint, which *it* does abominably."—E. D.

a MS. from me above a month back, and I have not yet heard any tidings of its acceptance or rejection. . . . I had asked him here. Orr of London was to join him on his trip."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bregenz, *July* 17, 1848.

"Your letter of the 8th has this day arrived, and I hasten to express my full concurrence in *your*—but not in Longfield's—view of the transaction, save where you both concur in thinking that Curry's failure may eventuate favourably for us. Is there any chance of my being able to purchase the stock and the copyrights of 'O'Malley' and 'Lorrequer'? without which the set is incomplete. I cannot say that I anticipate such a probability. I could only hope for it through the intervention of a publisher, and in the existing state of monetary matters few would adventure in any speculation. M'G. will, I have no doubt, try and possess himself of the books; and if such be his intention, I would be glad to be a party to his purchase. It would be well to know his views and what course he may probably take, or what [course he would] advise us to pursue.

"In the event of any composition with creditors, what is your opinion of my claim? Should I expect to be rated in Curry's assets? Or should I hope for my proportion of assets as *we* claim?

"M'Glashan has not acknowledged a MS. sent two months ago. I can neither fathom his plans by this system nor see how his silence chimes in

with his fervent protestations for a renewal of our relations.

"My meagre dedication did not, and could not, say a thousandth part of what I feel,—but even so much was pleasurable to say before the world. I would indeed be proud to associate you in any part of it. As it is, I believe 'The Knight' is the best of the breed, and hence the reason for calling it yours.

"I expect to leave for Italy about Aug. 4, but address me always 'Coutts et Cie,' who still will continue to exercise the sinecure of my bankers."

IX.

LETTERS TO MISS EDGEWORTH.

1843–1847.

At Riedenburg Lever closed a correspondence, commenced in 1843, with Miss Edgeworth. In 1843 the author of 'Castle Rackrent,' in her seventy-seventh year, was still working assiduously in her Edgeworthstown home.

To Miss Edgeworth.

"Templeogue House, Co. Dublin,
Nov. 10, 1843.

"Madam, — I have a great favour to ask at your hands—and, like most people in similar circumstances, not any claim whatever to support the prayer of my petition. My desire is to obtain your permission to dedicate to you a book of mine called 'Tom Burke,' the first volume of which will appear early in December. To associate, even on such slender terms, my humble effort with a name confessedly the first in my country's literature, is the motive which prompts me to this request, while I gladly embrace the occasion

to assure you that you have no more ardent admirer of your goodness and your genius than your very humble and devoted servant."

To Miss Edgeworth.

"TEMPLEOGUE HOUSE, CO. DUBLIN,
Nov. 13, 1843.

"MADAM, — It may be, that while asking a favour I may be obliged to ask your pardon for importunity. About a week since I addressed a few lines to you requesting your permission to dedicate to you a book of mine called 'Tom Burke of Ours,' but not having heard from you in reply, I conclude my letter has not reached you. I cannot, however, relinquish—without another endeavour—a hope I have long cherished to write your name within a volume of mine, and be, even on such slender terms, associated with one whom I feel to be the first of Irish writers. If you will accord me this permission, I shall deem it a very great favour conferred on your very humble and obedient servant."

In his 'Life of Lever' Dr Fitzpatrick states that Lever set out in 1844 on his driving tour through Ireland, with the intention of paying a formal visit to Miss Edgeworth. There is no evidence that this visit was paid. In a preface to 'The Knight of Gwynne,' the author declares his acquaintanceship with Miss Edgeworth arose out of a letter she wrote to him correcting a mistake he had made as to the authorship of an epigram

on Sir William Gladowes (afterwards Lord Newcomen). Almost in the same breath he admits that he has no memory for dates, and he couples this admission with a regret that he never kept a note-book. Miss Edgeworth's tardy reply did not reach Charles Lever till the summer of 1845, when he was lingering at Carlsruhe.

To Miss Edgeworth.

"Carlsruhe in Baden, Hof von Holland,
Aug. 19, 1845.

"Dear Madam,—Your letter addressed to me in Dublin followed me here into the heart of the Black Forest, where I have been sojourning for some time past. I have really no words to speak my gratitude for the kindness which dictated such a letter,—so full of flattering encouragement, so abounding in expressions of good cheer. It is not because I have met with so little approval from the Press of my own country that I set great store by your criticisms,—though even the contrast has its consolations,—but that I begin to feel confidence under an approval from you, which no praise from one less competent could inspire. Your kindness, too,—like every real kindness,—had the merit of an *apropos*. I was beginning to feel unusually depressed about the fortunes of my book. I had received so many hints, based on misconceptions, of the characters and the plot, that I found, or fancied I found, I had been misrepresenting my own intentions, praising what I deprecated, and apologising for what I felt con-

demnatory. Fancy, then, the delight I experienced on hearing that you had read me aright—nay, more, developed in full the shadowy and vague forms my weaker hand only dared to trace, but could not venture to colour! I am not able to tell you how full of hope, how full of ambition, you have left me,—how totally you have routed the growing despondency against which, unassisted, I struggled in vain. It is not, believe me, that your flattery has made me *tête montée;* but, even taking it as mere flattery, I can say to myself, 'It is Miss Edgeworth, after all.' If I am destined to do what may be worthy, I shall date the effort from the day I received your letter,—a day which made me prouder than I ever felt before, and happier than any praise hereafter can make me."

After the lapse of a year we find Lever thirsting for further praise or encouragement. There is something almost pitiful in his timid appeal to Miss Edgeworth for her opinions concerning 'The O'Donoghue' and 'The Knight of Gwynne,'—the latter novel was at the time appearing in monthly parts. Lever was always able to form a very shrewd estimate of the merits or demerits of his own writings, and in his later days press criticism, adverse or laudatory, seems to have affected him but little. It was different, however, in his earlier days, when abuse or neglect caused him grave disappointment and vexation, and when a laudatory review unduly elated him.

To Miss Edgeworth.

"Riedenburg, Bregenz, l'Autriche,
July 14, 1846.

"Dear Madam,—It is exactly a year since you wrote to me the kindest and most flattering letter it has ever been my fortune to receive. I have read it over so often that I almost have it by heart, and yet I never recur to the precise phrases of your brilliant note without renewed pleasure, renewed encouragement. It may be that you have long since forgotten both the epistle and the object of it. It cannot be an isolated piece of kindness on your part, and may well have escaped your memory. Let me recall the circumstance by saying it was an allusion to a book of mine called 'The O'Donoghue,' of whose earlier numbers you augured well, but of whose later ones I will not dare to tax your opinion. My present object is to thank you for a piece of kindness, whose effect is as fresh this instant as when first conferred. I recur to the expression of your encouragement as a certain relief in hours of doubt and despondency; and as the prisoner in Schundau only permitted himself the relaxation of looking out on the Elbe in days of unusual depression, I have kept your letter for times when a failing heart and ebbing hope have made me need the voice of encouragement.

"May I ask if you have chanced upon the book called 'The Knight of Gwynne'? I will not ask your opinion—nor do I wish one word of criticism. I feel too sensibly it should have been very

different, for I *had* in my head a good subject and wandered from it, but I would like to know that it reached you.

"I am living in a wild valley of the Austrian Tyrol, away from every source of information of what passes in the world — away equally from critical reproof or the word of cheering hope. I will not tell you with what pleasure I take up the lines whenever you bid me go forward, nor how anxiously I would learn what may be your present judgment, while I would willingly spare you (and myself) the pain of an unfavourable verdict should conscience dictate one."

To Miss Edgeworth.

"Riedenburg, Bregenz, Lac de Constance,
New Year's Day, 1847.

"Dear Madam,—That a letter of mine should have gone astray is of little moment to any one, but that I should be under the imputation of ingratitude for your most kind letter of last August is of very great consequence to me, and to prevent this possible event I write now—uncertain whether a note I had unluckily intrusted to a private hand may have ever reached you. I was travelling in the Tyrol when your letter found me, and I replied to it at once, giving my letter to a person returning to England, with several others, one of which I know for certain did not come to hand. By the same occasion I directed my publisher to send you a little volume called 'St Patrick's Eve'—has this miscarried?

"I am uncertain whether I should not prefer the unjust reproach of neglect to the possible offence of boring you in duplicate. Still, it is better to incur this *risque*, for not two nor twenty letters would convey my thankfulness for all your kindness and encouragement. It is not because your two letters are my only literary triumphs that I set such store by them, though such is truly the case; but that I see reflected in my own little children the eager delight with which I myself as a child read your writings and learned to love them. Your praise is then doubly dear, as it partakes of the character of a reward to one of your *élèves*. Let me add that there is a domestic triumph in this too, and that my little people felt proud of Papa when he told them what Miss Edgeworth said of him. I am afraid to speak of my 'Knight of Gwynne,' lest my former letter should be already before you, and all the [? gossip] about my intentions and how I lapsed from them be a twice-told tale. One thing is certain, however the story would have inclined, the same faults would cling to it. I have no constructiveness in my head; the most I am capable of is the portraiture of certain characters with more or less of contrast or 'relief' between them. These once formed, I put them *en scène*, to die out in an early chapter when their vitality is weak, — if stronger, to survive to the end of the volume. That such halting incoherency would make very slovenly inartistic narratives, I have only to look back on what I have written to see.

My own deficiencies, added to the fatal facility of No. publication, have combined to make this a grave and, I fear, irremediable fault with me, and even when I strive after better things, I invariably find that every step upwards is made at the cost of injury to my popularity, and when my friends encourage, my publisher is sure to upbraid me.

"The epigram I quoted in 'The Knight' was repeated to me at least twenty years back by a singularly agreeable and gifted conversationalist, the late Wm. Gouldersby, my brother's predecessor in the Rectory of Tullamore. I was only a boy when I heard it, and need not say how strong was the impression made that has endured to the present.

"Your kindness—like all real kindnesses—emboldens, and I would, if I dared, ask your permission to say something of my next story,—I mean, of one that I intend to write at a future day. As I have already confessed to my inability to construct a plot and continue all the tortuous difficulties and surprises of a well-imagined tale, the most I could inflict upon you would be a meagre outline of my object, and the purpose for which my narrative is constructed: so much—if I had your permission—I should certainly like [to do].

"The post-mortem recollections you are good enough to notice in 'O'Leary' were little else than a transcript of my own feeling during recovery from the only severe illness I ever had.

[They] have so much of truth about them that they were actually present to my mind day after day.

"I have little doubt that volition, powerfully exerted under the pressure of religious fervour and faith, is the secret agency of those miraculous cures whose occasional authenticity is beyond question.

"My present task is writing a little volume of Tyrol sketches—partly to illustrate some of the national proverbs of that simple people. We have been living amongst them now for above a year, and hourly growing more and more attracted to their unaffected kindliness and sincerity. The little tales I am endeavouring to shape out have the veracity of real scenes and real people in their favour, so far as I can convey them, but are quite devoid of all high interest. But if you will allow me, whenever they appear, to send you a copy, it will give me sincere gratification.

"I will not trespass on the goodness which has already given me such heartfelt pleasure by asking you to write to me. I will only say that I have never felt at the same time so proud and so happy as when reading those [letters] you have sent me, and that I thank you again and again for the happiness in which I write myself."

To Miss Edgeworth.

"Riedenburg, Bregenz, Lac de Constance,
Jan. 28, 1847.

"Dear Madam,—Your letter is now before me, and although I can fancy how tired you are of *my* gratitude, I am never weary of telling you how

much I feel *your* kindness. As a manager returns thanks for the *dramatis personæ* of his corps, I beg to repeat mine for Miss Darcy, Daly, Freney, and Co.,[1] who, I beseech you to believe, have derived any spirit of life they possess from the genial breath of your encouragements. Like the 'Bourgeois Gentilhomme,' who spoke prose without knowing, I find I really had a story to tell, and, however late came the knowledge, your criticism set me about seeing how best to do it.

"Pray accept my excuses for what must have been a very bungling expression in my last note, and which has caused you an apprehension that, although only momentary, I am sincerely sorry for,—sorry, I will own not only on your account, but on my own—my *amour propre*, having no more tender point than the dread of being a bore. I never intended to inflict my MS. on you, for after some ninety-nine good and sufficient reasons comes the hundredth,—I never wrote more at any time than was sufficient for the monthly call of my printers, and that only at the spur of the emergency. In taking what I felt to be the great liberty of asking your counsel, I had still a sense of moderation for an author, and would not worry you by what is called a sketch. Indeed, it is your opinion as to the *intention* of the tale I would sue for, and your judgment of how far the story seems suited to such a hand as mine,—whether in itself it contains enough of romantic and dramatic element to be a good theme to work out.

[1] Characters in 'The Knight of Gwynne.'—E. D.

"And now *à l'ouvrage!* It occurred to me when attached to a British Embassy to learn that the whole scheme and game of Irish politics were not only known to the members of the Roman Catholic clergy, but that they took the very deepest interest in the cause and progress of events, and, strangest of all, were informed thoroughly on all the points of social distinctions at issue amongst us—knowing the very names of such localities and obscure people as were the scenes or actors in outrage or disturbance,—were conversant with the petty details of magisterial justice, and aware of all that terrible machinery of crime which for years back has been at work in Ireland. That such knowledge should have originated in mere curiosity would be absurd to conceive; that it sprung from a deep interest in the events is far easier to see, and in some cases I even believe from a controlling, regulating power that, if not exercised to promote actual crime, yet could watch its progress and effect, withholding the opposing influences the Church could supply if she would. This, of course, is surmise, and mere surmise,—the former part I *know*. I know also that details of Irish outrage have been transmitted to Rome, not by post, but by a secret system of transmission from priest to priest, from Belgium to the Vatican, by *journées d'étapes*. This, to say the least, is very curious, but I think it is more. I believe it to be highly dangerous. I do not know whether you will smile at my fancies that the days of Hildebrand might yet be in store for us, but I feel if I were known to you personally I should

scarcely be supposed likely to be regarded as an alarmist, and least of all on such grounds. My friends generally accuse me of having, from long foreign residence, a very tolerant feeling towards Romanism.

"Now, without tormenting you with any details, my idea would be to take this theme as the groundwork of a story, whose scene should lie alternatively in Ireland and abroad, the characters being home and foreign as occasion required. My priest (Machiavellian, of course) would be the *cheval de bataille*—not attempted, I need scarcely say, in any rivalry with Eugene Sue, whose vast superiority in every way as a writer refutes such a presumption, but because the object would open up a very different class of character and interest. My people would be enlisted from various ranks and conditions of men, and afford contrasts of country as well as of individuality.

"This meagre outline it is I would ask your opinion of. Indeed, I scarce knew how shadowy and vague it was till I wrote it down here, and yet there is that *within* it which a really strong hand might turn to account. Will you kindly say if this be the kind of material that such [? a hand] as mine could work out with interest?

"I told you I would not inflict a MS. upon you, and here I have been doing something so very like it that I am ashamed to look back. However, if you knew how much more prosy and tedious I could have been, and on the very same subject, too, you would be gratified to be let off so easily.

"My best thanks for the hints about the two books. I have already written for them. Strange enough you should have suggested Spain as a likely *locale* for interest, at a time when I was actually meditating a visit to the Peninsula, my former chief being made Ambassador at the Court of Lisbon, and having pressed me to visit him.

"Your last letter put me into such good-humour with my 'Knight,' that I set about writing a new No., and with your criticism so fully in my head, I believe I did better than at any previous stage of his monthly existence.

"There is no part of your praise I set more value on than what you observe as to the good-breeding of certain characters, for while our fashionable (!) writers depict ladies and gentlemen by a hundred distinctive traits of manners and taste, all evidencing the most vulgar views of life, there is another class who love to represent every person of station as a species of moral monster, made of sensuality, deceit, and utter selfishness. If I have avoided these opposite errors, I wish I may have hit the middle course without at the same time making good manners insipid. Your praise lets me hope this, and I could not wish for a more competent authority. I need not now say with what eagerness I will read any remarks you are so kind as to make on my 'Knight.' The book only occupies any place in my esteem by reason of your opinion. If you see cause to continue it, I am but too happy to be reconciled to my unworthy offspring.

"My Tyrol stories [1] I have shelved for the present. They grew to be *triste* in spite of me, so I resolved to wait for better weather and better spirits, or in other words (such as my children tell me), 'until Papa gets another pleasant letter from Miss Edgeworth.'"

For many years Lever had been engaged in rough passages-at-arms with the Catholic Church militant in Ireland, and though he was by no means a bigoted Anti-Romanist, he regarded "the priest in politics" as a highly dangerous factor. It is greatly to the credit of Miss Edgeworth's sense of proportion, and to her level-headedness and her acumen, that she saw that if Charles Lever made "priestcraft" his pivot, he would be tempted to outstrip the limits of fair-play in fiction. And it is creditable to Lever that he was so easily dissuaded from undertaking the novel in which the Irish priesthood — then his sworn foe — was to figure as the conglomerate villain of the piece. No doubt the book which Lever had in his mind was one which he proposed to his Dublin publisher, James M'Glashan, giving it the provisional title of 'Corrig O'Neill.' Some of the material for this abandoned novel he used in 'The Daltons,' in which the Abbé D'Esmonde has a prominent part, though this ecclesiastic's intriguing (which is almost purely political) has little concern with affairs Hibernian.

[1] Two of these tales of Tyrol, probably the only Tyrol stories written by him, were subsequently included in 'Horace Templeton.' —E. D.

To Miss Edgeworth.

"Riedenburg, Bregenz, Lac de Constance,
April 6, 1847.

"My dear Miss Edgeworth,—I am not quite certain that in now thanking you—and thank you I do most cordially and gratefully—for your kind letter, I am not imitating the obtrusive and old-fashioned politeness of people who will not slip away without saying the 'good nights.' Not even the fear of being classed with these *rococos*, however, shall prevent me from saying how I feel the extreme good-nature that dictated your delightful letter, and I now see—I own I never did see so clearly till now—the difficulties of my new story, and in your warnings I already read the censure, anticipatory as it is, of the very faults I should inevitably have committed. I do not fear, indeed, that I should have fallen into any imitation of Eugene Sue—for whose genius I entertain nothing like the admiration I feel for Balzac's, and for whose false morality and no principle I have a hearty contempt; but I do feel that my prejudices might have easily led me away to father on my priest evils, social and political, which in all likelihood he could never have been answerable for, and, in my anxiety to make out my case, prove too umch.

"I am, then, if not deterred, at least checked as to the projected story, and will not adventure on it without more thought and reflection. Perhaps the tone towards Ireland at this moment is not very favourable to such portraiture: indeed, I am

told that anything Irish is an ungracious theme to English ears just now, and I am reminded of the man who could never laugh at Liston, for remembering that the actor owed him ten pounds.

"If I fear to ask, I hope no less that my 'Knight' holds his place in your good opinion. I am aware that some of the late numbers introduce the reader to less agreeable companionship than is always pleasant, but I felt that the table-land was too even and unbroken, and that strong contrasts were needed to relieve some of the uniformity, even at the hazard of damaging my picture by false keeping. After all, there is nothing so bad as being tiresome, and I can see that this dread evil was spreading over my story. Heavens knows if, endeavouring to avert it, I have not made bad worse!

"I am not unreasonable enough to ask you to write to me again—but this much I will say, that I know of no favour for which I am more grateful, nor for any kindness on which I set such store, as a letter from Miss Edgeworth."

This letter seems to have closed the correspondence. In May 1849 Miss Edgeworth died at the advanced age of eighty-three years.

X.

COMO—FLORENCE—BAGNI DI LUCCA.

1847–1849.

Lever was now at the threshold of the most brilliant period of his career. Still in the prime of life, he was able to enjoy all the fun of the fair, and to record his impressions of men and affairs with unflagging vivacity, but with mellowed shrewdness. He neither hoped nor desired to reach again that giddy pinnacle upon which stood 'Harry Lorrequer' and 'Charles O'Malley.' He now possessed a firmer grip of character; he was more adroit in the arts of description and dialogue; and he had gained a truer insight into the workings of the human mind. His military fever was slowly burning itself out, though he was able to fan the embers into flame when, later, he was inditing the adventures of "Maurice Tiernay." His sense of fantastic and boisterous humour was as strong as when he had created "Mickey Free" and "Corney Delany": under firmer control it had lost much of its side-splitting qualities; yet, as one may judge from 'Con

Cregan,' it was only because he held his art in high esteem that he did not, in his later period, produce another "Lorrequer."

It has been the habit, in criticising Lever's novels, to state that a startling change in his manner originated with 'Glencore,' published in 1855; but this statement is made mainly on the authority of Charles Lever. He really began to "sober down" with 'The O'Donoghue' in 1844 and 'The Knight of Gwynne' in 1845; and when, on the romance-inspiring shores of Lake Como, he planned the adventures of "Roland Cashel," his early nonchalant manner was fast disappearing.

To Alexander Spencer.

"Villa Nova, Lake of Como, *Aug.* 9, 1847.

"At last we are in Italy, and if the journey—bringing seven horses and three children over the Alps—was not without its share of anxieties, our present *séjour* well repays them all. Indeed, I could not attempt to give an idea of the mingled grandeur and beauty of this gorgeous lake—Alpine in sublimity, and yet a tropical picture of vegetation. Our little villa, one of the very smallest on the lake, stands next the Villa D'Este, so renowned as Queen Caroline's — about two and a half miles from Como, in a small embayment bounded by lofty mountains, and almost hid among the thick shade of olives, citrons, wild fig-trees, and cactus. On every side stands some picturesque abode, all, or nearly all, belonging to distinguished persons, and built in every variety

of architectural taste. Castles and cottages, forts, villas, palaces, temples, all more beautiful than I have ever seen before, because that neither colour nor tracery suffers from the effects of weather; and nothing is more common than to see frescoes in all the freshness of tint on the outside of houses, while statues are of a whiteness that even our galleries rarely exhibit. Gondolas, in all the gay and *frappant* colours that aquatic coquetry can suggest, are eternally shooting past our windows; and now, while I write at midnight, the lake is alive with passing *barcarolles* and the glitter of torches, — making a picture of strange and most beautiful effect.

"I would ramble on for hours and yet convey, perhaps, nothing — at least nothing approaching the inexpressible charm of a scene where beauty of landscape blends with a picture of life made up of all that high civilisation and culture can create. It realises in one spot all I had dreamed of Italy—and whether in the balmy air, the sky lit up by stars of seemingly unnatural brilliancy, the lake blue as a turquoise, I fancy I see and feel the influence that renders every other land insipid after this.

"Your letters forwarded to me from Rheineck arrived here to-day. I have only to say how perfectly I concur with you in all that has been done — anxiously hoping, of course, that a good issue may follow, but quite satisfied to await with patience for the event. M'Glashan's conduct is indeed a puzzle. He received from me (at his

own urgent request too) a MS. on the 18th May. It was part of a small vol. which he purposed to treat with me for.[1] Since then he has not even written to acknowledge the receipt, much less to discuss the terms I proposed for the work. Prior to that he and Orr [? intended] to pay me a visit. I replied expressing my perfect readiness to receive them. But nothing followed. I should now be greatly gratified at recovering my MS., and if you could obtain it for me, Robert Maxwell of Gardiner Street would give it to our old friend, John Maxwell, who has promised to spend some days here on his way back to Florence, where he resides. I have not as yet made—nor do I see any immediate hope of making—a new literary engagement for the New Year, books and booksellers being at a discount. If, then, I could, by any means, obtain a hold on my former books, I would at once set about a new and cheap edition.

"I am so near the Swiss frontier — at the Canton of Tessin — that I prefer making my post town there, where all newspapers are admitted freely. Address me, then, Poste Restante, Chiasso, Switzerland."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Villa Lima, Como, *Sept.* 1, 1847.

"I send you herewith a letter received from Chapman this day. You will see by one ex-

[1] 'Tales of the Tyrol.'

pression — the same crucible — that he, too, is [alive] to the possibility of a reprint of my books himself. As to 'Horace Templeton,' — which is now my only spec,—it is a secret—to be published without my name. I thereby receive a small sum, but I hazard no fame, and would willingly try if, under a new sobriquet, I could lay siege to a new public.

"Have you any reason to believe that £500 to £600 with my claim would be accepted [for the copyrights]? I am more than ever eager to recover them, because, during the reissue, I could lie by and yet have some means of living till better bookselling days. Above all, obtain my MS. from M'Glashan, for independently of his cavalier treatment of me, I have now, *viâ* 'Horace Templeton,' a local habitation to accommodate my stray sheep withal. And this 'Tyrol Tale' will now do me good service. Send it, therefore, and with it will you send the pages of my story called 'Carl Stelling, the Painter of Dresden,' printed in the July number of the D. U. M., 1845? M'Glashan could give the sheet without destroying a number, but if not, buy one and tear it out. This also finds a lodging in the Hôtel Templeton.

"I cannot thank you enough for all your kindness in writing to me—a kindness that does not need the force of contrast (in others' neglect) to make it dearer. I am a bankrupt in thanks, and have coolly resolved to die in your debt."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Villa Lima, Lago de Como,
Sept. 20, 1847.

"We could never think of pushing Curry to a bankruptcy. If others take this upon them we must abide by it, but I hope, for the poor man's sake, it may not be so. . . . M'Glashan scarcely deserves a paragraph. . . . O'Sullivan's letter was in so far only an allusion to the affair at issue—that is, he said, M'G. has, it appears, an MS. of yours in his hands, which he will write to you about by this post or the following. Four months ago he (M'G.) wrote to me asking, in eager terms, to see this MS., and promising a reply upon it without the least delay,—since which he has never once written, not even an acknowledgment of its arrival.

"I would beg of you to keep the MS. by you—that is, if it should not have already been forwarded to [catch] Maxwell in London. As to the printed story,—'Carl Stelling,'—will you scratch out the title at top, and the words 'by the editor' carefully, and cross out the Introduction, letting the tale begin by the words of the narrator—"There are moments in life," &c.,—and send it to Mr Chapman with a line to say that this printed matter comes in after the MS. pages of chapter xi. of 'Horace Templeton'? I may here add that the aforesaid H. T. is already—so far at least as eleven chapters go—in the printer's hands. It is precious bad stuff, and, worse still, very lachrymose and depressing—I mean, so far

as such very powerless trash can be—*Mais que voulez-vous?* And in the present case I have laid the child at another man's door, and will never own him—if he doesn't grow up more thrivingly than I hope for.

"You wouldn't believe what difficulties the authorities here make about the unhappy document. The Podesta is afraid of it! The Legation trembles at it—the Commessario says it is 'Pericolosissimo!' and how I am to find an *employé* courageous enough to look on while I sign it, I cannot tell. I fear that in the end I must go up to Milan, where the functionaries will possibly have more hardihood.

"I am greatly gratified that you have seen John Maxwell—whose visit I look for with much pleasure. We have not met for seventeen years,—up to that we had spent, nearly day-by-day, the previous ten or twelve years always together. It will be curious for each to see time's changes in the other, and how far the opinions and tastes of the man already steering round Cape Dangerous have diverged from (those of) the boy and the youth. For myself, there are many [? changes] that I can recognise; nor am I blind to the telling of coming years, which show me the diminished sense of enjoyment I possess to heretofore,—how little I value society, how tiresome I find what I hear are very pleasant people, and so on. And without being actually old, I am old enough to think that the world used to be pleasanter long ago, and that friends were more

cordial and more frank, and that there was more *laisser-aller* in the course of life than in these hardworking, money-seeking, railroading days we've got now.

"The most enduring tastes a man can cultivate (avarice apart) are, I believe, the love of scenery and music. There I feel stronger than ever: the former has, perhaps from living a good deal alone, become a passion with me, and I am better pleased to have glens, glaciers, and cataracts than the fascinations of soirees and receptions.

"Keep 'Horace Templeton' quite *en cachet*, for though I suppose I shall be known easily, I will not confess, but die innocent.

"We have very grave events happening here at Milan, but they are kept quiet by the police, and even in society every one you ask on the subject says—*Non e niente:* and so they will keep on saying till the streets are barricaded, and the city in open revolt. Between ourselves, the reform party here are great blackguards, and the Pope [? without irreverence] an ass to think that moderate concessions and reasonable privileges will content a mob, who only look for a new constitution as an occasion for general pillage. It's all very fine for 'the gentlemen of England, who live at home at ease,' to say God-speed to the march of Liberal opinions in other lands; but let them remember that our own institutions took centuries to grow and to consolidate, and were often shaken and menaced, and only at length firmly established by the

force of public opinion, which finds its exponent in aristocratic institutions,—a hereditary peerage and a popular assembly, nearly four-fifths of which is aristocratic. Try the same systems in other countries, and see what will come of it. Get people to make laws who never met for the voting of a parish cess or a penny poor rate; liberate a press that only asks freedom that it may revel in libel; set up an aristocracy that are uneducated and unreformed as objects of general respect! No, no! If the Pope had contented himself with his first [? effort], and swept the Church and its monastic institutions free from abuses; had he examined into the state of charities and hospitals and schools,—he would have done far more good, though far less obtrusively, than by quarrelling with Austria, and fraternising with Mazzini & Co.

"There are rumours of an outbreak at Bologna; probably, my dear friend, you have already sighed forth a wish that I was in the midst of it rather than [that I should] inflict upon you this tiresome piece of prolixity. But remember what the old woman said to the sentinel, who threatened to put the bayonet into her hinder part—'Divil thank you—sure it's yer thrade!'

"'Fore God! I think a Bull from the Pope must be easy to obtain in comparison with the formality of this unlucky document. I now enclose it *en règle.*"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Villa Lima, Lago de Como,
Oct. 5, 1847.

"You say you are puzzled by what Chapman says as to my being charged with the production (at least one-half cost) of unsold copies. Yet the fact is precisely so. There were of 'Hinton' something above 16,000 sold and somewhere like 20,000 printed, and with the interval between the two amounts you will find that I am charged with a moiety of the cost of producing. It was this fact, coupled with the trickery of a depreciatory sale, that made Chapman pronounce the whole [? transaction] a cheat.[1]

. . . . . .

"It was Chapman's accountant who discovered M'Glashan's status, [which] is indeed the greatest mystery of all. How he could leave the concern so deeply indebted I cannot conceive. Great sacrifices, I am sure, he made to retain the Magazine, but the sum of £3000 must be six times more than would purchase the D. U. M.

"Is it not possible that some day or other that same Magazine may be in the market? If it were mine—solely—I would make £1000 out of it per annum.

"I am sincerely gratified that you have read,

[1] What Edward Chapman had actually written (some time previously) was: "You have been in the hands of the Philistines. It is these things which bring discredit on our craft, and make authors look upon us as a set of ghouls ready to eat them, body and bones—with a tendency to get fat upon their brains. No doubt it was thought that you would make a nice dish *curried*."—E. D.

and, better still, are pleased with, my Tyrolean story. Had I not too just grounds to fear how the very aspect of my hand-o'-write must weary you, I would have asked you to read the MS. Now that you have done so, I may say that I wrote it in the fulness of my heartfelt admiration for the land and the people,—one in which and with whom I would feel delighted to linger out whatever may remain to me of life.

"As for Como, I own I like it better every day I stay here; but if it be very pleasurable it is costly. Every one here is rich,—millionaire Russians and Lombards, Venetian Eccelenzas, Grandees d'Espagne, &c., are around us on every side; and the whole Lake is a gala of gay gondolas and dressy signoras, which figure not only reflected in the water, but once more and less pleasantly in one's bank account.

"Maxwell wrote to me from Paris, and I replied to him to Livonia, as he desired; but he had not abandoned all idea of coming here, and was making, as fast as the heavy mail and his bronchitis would permit, for Florence.

"There is nothing really alarming in the state of affairs here. The real fun is the stupid ignorance of the English press, who are hailing the Pope and his reform party as though they were members of the Cobden League. . . . The Pope is an ardent, simple-minded, well-intentioned man, who sincerely desires amelioration of government, but the real movers are the *pères* Jesuits, who are trading, like certain speculators on the Bourse,

and making false purchases, to intrigue for a fall in the Funds. They are speculating on the reaction that *must* follow. Austria, who hates and never has tolerated the residence of this party in her states, is terrified—hence the occupation of Ferrara. Meanwhile the English press swallows the bait and cries God speed the movement! Peel at least is aware of the truth,—so much I know from my old friend Sir H. S[eymour]."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Como, *Oct.* 19, 1847.

"We are again *en route*—this time with a long road before us—to Florence. . . .

"Chapman informs me that the [Curry] accounts are of such a nature as totally to preclude his being able to form anything like a correct estimate of the value of the property. He adds that there is a 'juggle somewhere,' and suggests, with my concurrence, that he sends his own accountant over to Dublin to investigate the concern, — of course the cost of this step to be borne conjointly. I have at once acceded to this request, for even if I did not coincide in the fitness, I yield to the consideration that it engages Chapman in the affair, and thus renders him more likely to become a whole or part proprietor of the books. His becoming a republisher of them is the best—the only —guarantee I can have for his continuing all dealings in the future. An honest man and a prompt paymaster included in a publisher are very rare gifts, and I am greatly indisposed to relinquish

them. Besides, he has advanced me some hundreds since I concluded my agreement, and unless I can manage to work it out with him it would be a heavy encumbrance to pay if I had to treat with other parties. This is my whole case; and if it be in some respects a cloudy one, I have yet—thank God!—good health and good courage and good spirits to meet it: and once this affair of the copyrights [is] over, [I] will make a bold effort to go to work once more.

"I have now half written, and part printed, the affair called 'Horace Templeton,' for which, being anonymous, I will only receive at first £250—being, I greatly fear, about £240 above its value. But I felt it easy on my conscience, as my name—such as it is—remains safe. There are, I hope, some things in H. T. you will like. You who know me well will see how much of the real man has oozed out, and how impossible it has been to make the confessions of a diary purely fictitious. This—which of course will have no interest for the public—will not be without its interest for you, and I shall be impatient to hear your opinion."

Towards the end of October Lever, dazzling himself with prospects of splendid economy, set out for Florence.

On this journey he sustained a grievous loss. The Austrian authorities on the frontier seized all his papers, deeming them (Lever suggests) to be "part of a treasonable correspondence—purposely allegorical in form." Amongst the lost

documents were his University degree, his commission in a Derry militia regiment, agreements with publishers, private letters, and a protocol embodying the bargain between the novelist and Commissary-General Mayne, which (for a small consideration) entitled the author of 'Charles O'Malley' to introduce Mayne (with all his faults and follies) to the public as "Major Monsoon."

A search was instituted, after Lever's death, for the ravished papers, but the Austrian authorities could not, or would not, find them. An official—most likely Major Dwyer—who interested himself in the matter said, "I do not wonder at Lever having been suspected of *anything*, travelling, as he did, with piebald ponies, and wife and children with long flowing hair. The police could not make out what he was or might not be; and then he had that peculiar way of treating officials that seems to belong to many Irish persons whom I have known."

The Levers entrenched themselves in "Cara Standish." There was a private theatre attached to the palazzo. In common with his contemporary Dickens, Lever had a passion for theatrical entertainments. Mr Pearce paid him a visit in November, and was pressed by his host to prolong the visit for the purpose of playing "Joseph Surface" to Lever's "Charles Surface."

The Irish novelist readily adapted himself to life in "the very commercial but very profligate city of Florence" (as Father Prout describes it). He even went so far as to continue some of those

outré displayings which had given offence to the inhabitants of another grand-duchy: he drove his piebald cattle along the crowded avenue of La Cascine; and it was stated by unamiable people that he was at first taken to be a circus proprietor.

He was soon well known in fashionable circles. Florentine clubs and palaces extended their hospitality graciously; he was *persona grata* at the British Embassy, where his old friend, Sir George Seymour, held sway; he attended receptions at the brilliant court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Lever describes the Grand Duke Leopold as one of the most amiable of men and one of the weakest of sovereigns, able to keep possession of his throne only by avowing his willingness to abandon it.

Florence was the gayest of Italian cities when Lever established himself in the Palazzo Standish. The Cascine had special attractions for him. Florence, he declares, was to the world of Society what the Bourse is to the world of Trade. "Scandal here," he goes on to say, "holds its festival, and the misdeeds of every capital of Europe are discussed. The higher themes of politics occupy but few; the interests of literature attract still less: it is essentially the world of talk." And as Lever enjoyed conversation more than any other art or pastime, he revelled in Florentine life.

Notwithstanding the negligent attitude of Florence towards the interests of literature or its professors, many goodly British literary folk were denizens of the beautiful city of "magnificently stern and sombre streets." Amongst these were

Robert Browning and his wife, the vivacious and prying Mrs Trollope, and the once famous scientist, Mrs Somerville.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Florence, *Nov.* 24, 1847.

". . . Except the most miserable piece of depressing twaddle, yclept 'Horace Templeton,' the fruit of gloomy reveries and dreary brain-wanderings, I have nothing *sur le tapis*, but I'll try to set to work once that our affair Curry is settled."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Palazzo Standish, Florence, *Feb.* 4, 1848.

"I have this day received yours of the 25th asking respecting the insertion of 'Hinton' in 'The Dublin University Magazine.' This was done with my permission though manifestly against my interest, as the sale was thus rendered by so much less than we might reasonably have looked for in the No. form. Of course, however, we cannot now complain that we made a bad bargain; and as for the Currys, they will never allude to a matter whose discussion would tell against themselves. The Magazine history is this: When I was living in Brussels I received a letter from M'Glashan saying that if I liked to come to Ireland to take the editorship of the Magazine (which I had already expressed a strong wish to do), they would guarantee me at least £2000 for the first year, and after such a rate of remuneration as increased sales, &c., might warrant. I

came, and then, to my great disappointment, discovered that they included the whole sum I had already contracted to receive for 'Jack Hinton' in that same £2000 (viz., £1300), leaving me not £2000 but £700 for the editorship and authorship of the papers I wrote for 'The Dublin University Magazine.' It was, however, too late to retract. I had given up my profession, my station as attaché to the Embassy; my friends had ceased to regard me as a doctor, and so I was in for it. If I bore up tolerably well against this piece of trickery, it was really because I had resolved, come what would, not to lose courage,—and so I did continue for the very miserable three years I stayed in Ireland. I tell this now—I believe I never did tell it to you before,—not that it may in any way be of use or influence in the present conjuncture, but simply as a circumstance to show that I have never been *exigeant* or exacting in my dealings with other folks. Nor when I had (as I still have) a written pledge in my hands did I think its enforcement a matter of legal redress.

"I hope, ardently, that in the end the books may find themselves in Chapman's hands; but I feel so assured that Curry is a trickster, and that when his own narrow intelligence fails him he is always ready to avail himself of any counselled iniquity, that I still fear the termination of the affair.

"Do you see anything of M'Glashan, or hear of his doings? You are aware that he never replied to me, and consequently all intercourse has ceased

between us. Is he like to weather the storm, or do you think that he is outstaggering under the gale?

"The weather here is and has been delicious. I have never worn an upper coat, and never been one day without several hours on horseback. Such a climate I never believed to exist before."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bagni di Lucca, *Feb.* 26, 1848.

"I have just returned from a most interesting but somewhat precarious journey — to carry despatches from our Ambassador here to the general late in command of the Tuscan forces.[1] It was full of adventure and strange incident, and although the revolutionary [? movement] has been too rapid to make us more successful, the result has shown (which was a great object) the disposition of the government of England towards the fallen Grand Duke.

"I had a mountain range—one of the Apennines —to cross, with deep snow and glaciers. Sixteen hours' work to cross, of which only five could be performed on horseback, the remainder being on foot and by night—a night without a star too. This, with the consciousness that I had on my person a letter to a man for whose head 20,000 dollars were offered, made the attempt, to say the least, highly exciting. Well, here I am again, and, thank God, nothing the worse, save in some fatigue which a day or two will pull up.

"The revolutionary party here have conquered

[1] General de Langier.

for the present—that is, they have acquired the ascendancy of terror, precisely as the French democrats obtained it by enlisting in their cause all the most infamous and degraded criminals of the State, and this by the pressing threat of a pillage and a sack deterring the quieter population from even a murmur. The Grand Duke has fled to Gaeta, his life being no longer safe at St Stephano; and as General de Langier's troops have all accepted service under the Provisional Government, all hope of return to his throne is lost, except from foreign intervention.

"On Wednesday night last the peasantry—who are all loyal to the sovereign—attempted a movement in Florence, but the civil guard closed the gates and prevented entrance, and after some hours of drum-beating and alarm-bells, quiet was restored.

"Piedmont would send 12,000 men to restore the Duke (six would do it) if Gioberti were in the ascendant, but the hitch is that the radicals of Genoa are themselves watching the Tuscan revolt as a matter for their own [guidance]; and now we hear that Naples is again in open revolt, showing that the whole outbreak of Rome, Tuscany, and Naples was a preconcerted rising, planned and matured by the Mazzini faction. I began to fear that the case is almost desperate, and that Monarchy, or, what is better, Order and Legality, are doomed for a season at least in this peninsula. Sir George Hamilton's efforts have been unceasing to avert the dangers, and to his skill and energy

are owing even the length of peace we have hitherto enjoyed. If you think that these few remarks are of any interest, would you kindly send this to Sheehan, to whom I am unable at this emergency to write more fully? . . .

"I am anxiously looking for the reply to your proposition [to Curry]. God grant it may be successful. It would set my mind at rest, for some time at least.

"I am sorely afraid we must flit from this, which, if for no other reasons than the financial ones (and there are a score of others), will be a sad inconvenience to me; but I fancy we are about to have a taste of a *republica rosa*, for which I feel anything but inclined to be the witness.

"My wife and the weans are doing admirably. Although the events around us are very alarming, we have lived long enough among the population of this little locality to know and like the people, and, I flatter myself, are well thought of by them. My fear is only for marauders—the usual vagabonds who have deserted and are traversing the country in bands of twenty and thirty. These are really to be dreaded. It would, of course, be impossible to live long in a state of siege without suffering more than any residence would requite. If, therefore, the reign of anarchy here promises a continuance, I shall be off, but in what direction I know not. The Alps are impassable to wheel-carriages, and to horses save those in daily habit of passing, so that Switzerland is cut off; and Lombardy, which is nearest, is not in the con-

dition to make one seek it. France, besides, is on the eve of another commotion. *Que faire?* Meanwhile we have good courage and light hearts—at least, so far as the danger goes."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bagni di Lucca, *March* 20, 1848.

". . . I am low in pocket and in hope. Perhaps it were better, as you suggest, to draw near England,—but in reality it is as little my country as America."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bagni di Lucca, *April* 21, 1848.

"I would suggest some compromise with Curry—[? a bargain] to superintend an edition which would give me a regulated share of profits, and spare me the mortification of being thrown upon the market in a disgraceful and unauthorised fashion. . . . If Chapman would give £800 I am quite ready to go half. I would go over at once, but really this is a nervous moment to leave a family in Italy. Assassinations and pillage are too rife to make absence easy. Besides, with two monthly Nos. to supply and a very low exchequer, time and cash are grave obstacles.

"Natural smallpox of a most dangerous type is raging around us, and I fear that I must run away to Florence—which, with a big tail of men and maids, is something very formidable. I am the more inclined to yield to my fears and fly, but

my poverty should influence me in incurring a considerable risk.

"The insurances are always in my thoughts."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Standish, Florence,
May 27, 1848.

"As to the under-sale [*i.e.*, selling at reduced prices], so little was I aware of it that when in the January of 1845 Mr Pearce went to London from Templeogue to negotiate the sale of 'St Patrick's Eve' with Chapman & Hall, Mr Chapman's argument for offering a lower sum than I proposed was that 'Mr Lever's works were in some instances advertised at depreciated prices.' Pearce wrote to me word of this, and, indignant at what I believed to be a falsehood, I hurried in to Dublin and asked M'Glashan how such a story could get abroad? He said he couldn't conceive how, for he knew there was no truth in it. But his hesitation and confusion were extreme.

"If I could proceed against those parties who alleged having informed me [of the under-sale] I would certainly do so. The whole case is evidently now 'up.' I see no prospect of any benefit by further proceedings, and if you are of my opinion that an Equity suit would serve me, I would lie down under the wrong and leave it among the many hard rubs in life I have suffered. If I understand the matter aright, I have no share whatever in the proceedings of any sum to be obtained for the sale of these works or copy-

rights, and very small prospects of any payment of the debt they owe me. Be it so. Now, one last chance. If these works are to be sold by auction, will their probable price be above the sum Chapman would give? It would be well to communicate with him on this subject. . . .

"As to the rate or grade at which I was to be paid for the over-sale after 11,000 of 'Hinton,' M'Glashan wrote to me one letter in which he said: 'The work will probably reach 20,000, in which case your profits will be doubled.' This letter, and all my papers and private letters, MSS., &c., have been lost on the way from Como here—or, more probably, destroyed by the police authorities,—so that ill-luck is of late no stranger to me.

"My dear friend, I have written a very disjointed, ill-connected scrawl, but I am a little 'abroad,' being in no wise prepared for the tidings that have just reached me. On one point only am I calm and collected,—the heartfelt gratitude I owe you for all you have done for me."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Capponi, Florence,
May 23, 1848.

"If the copyrights were to revert to me, I would at once turn my steps *towards* England,—at least, so far as Switzerland or Belgium,—while in the other alternative I'd make up my mind to remain here, which for moneyed reasons is almost compulsory.

"I have been drawing on my new book, 'Roland Cashel,' so far in advance, that I am unable to say how I shall get on as it draws near the end. We are living in quietness here, with war and revolution on every side. A new revolt at Naples has just *éclated*, in which the troops smashed the mob. Meanwhile, five frigates of the Neapolitans are gone to assist revolt in Venice. The Pope has been discovered playing double, and his great popularity is gone. I fear Lombardy is lost to Austria. Internal dissension at Vienna, revolt in Hungary and Bohemia, and desertion among the troops in Italy, have scarce left a chance of recovering this best and richest province. Florence, too, is ready to intervene, and then comes a grand European war, in which England must choose her side and join. I trust it may not be an alliance with France."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Ximenes, Florence, *July* 18, 1848.

"I would rather relinquish than contest a disputed right. I read 'opinions,' therefore, only as so many different shades of probability which can but little influence the judicial results, and I come ever to the one same humiliating conclusion,—that it is better to treat quasi-amicably with the rogues who have cheated us than to leave the question to other as great rogues for decision.

"I would, therefore, as you suggest, advise with Chapman what steps to take for the repurchase; and without submitting the tangled web of disputed claims to renewed litigation, I would en-

deavour to [? obtain] a demand for the *whole* copyrights (subject, of course, to the diminution my rights would inflict), and if possible purchase them.

"I conclude that the assignees will, from their triumph at the Bankruptcy Court,—and such it is,—make a much higher demand than Curry did formally; but I opine, from what Chapman says of the trade, that few publishers, in London at least, would adventure upon a purchase where an author assumed an ill-defined and illimitable claim.

"The great object would then appear to me: first, to ascertain their expectations amicably, and if not such as I've prudently [? acceded] to, to wait for the sales and stand among the bidders like every one else,—of course taking care to make our protest against the right to dispose of all the copyrights. This without any further recourse to law or any single reference to lawyers or solicitors, I would strongly advise.

"My present state is, financially speaking, pretty much that of the present Government—a very lively system of daily disbursements and a very meagre amount of receipts; so that, barely to live, I have eaten up in advance half of 'Roland Cashel,' yea, even before he is written! But for this I should have drawn closer to England this summer,—not for any desire, God knows, to settle there, but to be near enough to London to negotiate some literary speculation or other that might clear me out of debt.

"I have not now means for this object, and must

remain here,—no penance if I had spirits and cash to make my mind easy.

"I believe you are quite correct in your view about M'Glashan, and the only point of the case that now strikes me as worth anything is how far his liability to the debt might be established.

"I am glad you like 'Roland,' which I did myself for half the first No.; but he has slidden out of my favour since that. However, I will in parts please you.

"Up to this moment Florence is the only tranquil spot in Europe. Naples, Rome, Milan, Vienna, Baden, Paris, all convulsed; but here the slightest disturbance is unknown. The truth is, there is a quiet peace-loving population, and a government so mild as to be no government at all.

"I have often been tempted to send over something about the war in Lombardy to the English papers, who have uniformly agreed up to this in disseminating the most gross and absurd falsehoods about it; but I have been deterred by thinking that of those who really might care for the theme of foreign politics, the greater part are bigoted against Austria, and the remainder indifferent to truth.

"The children are doing well, and fast becoming linguists. I wish there were some career I could think of for Charley other than what is called a profession. I have had some idea of the Navy for him, and although a poor thing, yet [*some words illegible*]. He is very smart, and can learn anything as quickly as any boy I ever met, so that

it seems half a pity to cover such gifts with a blue jacket."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Ximenes, Florence, *Aug.* 12, 1848.

". . . Truth is, I am stunned. The pressure that demands [? money] impedes any fresh efforts on my part, and I sit down to work with a depressed and jaded spirit. Nothing less nourishes than the head that is wet with tears. 'Roland,' bad as it is, is therefore better than it might be.

"Do you deem all intercourse with M'Glashan inadvisable? It is the only magazine where I should like to contribute, and if I could make any terms for a series of papers I should soon be in a position to clear off some of my debts. I cannot address him myself: if you chanced to meet him you might feel the way.

"The Austrians have reconquered Lombardy and the whole of Italy, and, if the French do not intervene, will soon be at peace."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Ximenes, Florence, *Aug.* 19, 1848.

". . . Although politically all looks more tranquil here, yet for personal reasons I should draw somewhat nearer to England. I am hampered by the difficulty of postal communication, and to go to London even alone and back would cost me above £100. Otherwise I like the place better than any I have ever known,—a climate beyond praise, a beautiful country, excellent society, and

perfectly sound liberty which lets you live in the world or out of it exactly as suits your inclination. The heat, to be sure, is great. 132° Fahrenheit yesterday on the terrace, and that at five o'clock in the afternoon!

"I hope you continue to like 'Roland Cashel.' Has any one detected Archbishop Whately as my Dean of Drumcondra? The whole *dramatis personæ* are portraits.

"As to Ireland. All foreign sympathy is over, [? owing to] the late cowardice and poltroonery of the patriots.[1] Even Italians can fight.

"As to the result of the attempt of Italian unity, however, the movement here is a complete failure. Naples is at feud with Sardinia, Sardinia with Tuscany, Rome with all these; and if there be one man in all Italy more hated than Carlo Alberto, it is the Pope. Pius IX. will in all likelihood be *chassed* this winter, and we shall have a Tipperary season of assassination—as the natural subsidence of a defeated outbreak—all over Southern Italy.

"We are going in a few days to Lucca and Via-Reggio for the sea-bathing, which, at least for a week or so, is a matter of necessity in this very roasting climate. The children have got the pale faces of the south already, and it is buying the *Bocca Toscana* somewhat dear to lose their roses at so early an age.

"I am hesitating about the sea for Cha. He

[1] See John Mitchel's 'Jail Journal' for observations on this observation.—E. D.

is a boy of very remarkable capacity,—can learn anything, and at once,—and I really scruple at the thought of immolating good talent in such a grave as the Navy."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Ximenes, Florence, *Sept.* 12, 1848.

"I have made a proposal to Chapman, but have not received his reply.

"If I could make any remunerative terms for a monthly series in a magazine, I could easily manage to gather some suitable materials. M'Glashan is, I suppose, a hopeless case. I have not been able to revisit London. I fancy I could easily make out such a class of engagement as would suit me, but the expense of the journey would be very considerable.

"It is very hard, under such circumstances, to write anything imaginative,—the stern cry of reality drowning the small whisperings of fancy. *N'importe!* I have pluck for almost anything when self-reliance will pull through, and I am resolved, if I can, not to be swamped."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bagni di Lucca, *Nov.* 1, 1848.

"Your letter of the 21st has this moment come to hand, and its last paragraph would inevitably decide me upon going at once to England if I had the means; but when I add the mercenary cost to the fatigue, sea-sickness,—for I should go

at least to Genoa by steamer,—inconvenience of leaving wife and brats in a distant and not over-quiet land, and, lastly, calculate how little my presence might avail after, I grow faint-hearted at the 'odds' against me.

"My resolve is, therefore, to stay here, whither we have come for economy, taking up our abode in a little inn in a sweet pretty country—and, I confess it, with not a privation to make us feel that prudence pays tax."

[He then suggests the purchase of his books by Chapman, offering Chapman as "a collateral security," if he embarks in the "spec," an insurance policy. He does not desire to be tied to Chapman, but sees that nothing can be done unless he gets the books unfettered. He says he is in Chapman's debt in the first place, and secondly, that there is a loss in repute in changing publishers, "always argued to the detriment of the author."]

"Chapman's apathy is great on all subjects, nor is he likely to be more alert here: first, that he never reaped the large profit from me that he hoped; [secondly,] because I am his debtor—never a *couleur de rose* portrait of any one. . . ."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bagni di Lucca, *Jan.* 20 [? 1849].

"I write to announce to you that I have more need than ever of a little good-luck, as I have this morning had a little girl—a very fat frowning little damsel—added to my battalion. My wife—

and that is the first consideration in these cases —is doing admirably. . . . Have you received 'Con Cregan'? Of course its paternity was plain to you. It is an effort to work out of a bad and profitless year, with what result God knows.

"I hear from London that 'Roland Cashel' is regarded as the best thing I have yet done, but also pronounced to be above the level of shilling readers,—a species of flattery intended to convey that I am to take the praise *vice* the pence.

"I have written a paper on Italy for the Feb. No. of 'The University,' so that you see I am the author of other productions besides babies.

"Chapman has shown such a perfect indifference on the subject of the copyrights, that I have not any hope of his mediation. I now regret that I did not negotiate with Orr, who publishes 'Con Cregan' for me."

During his first year in Florence Lever made the acquaintance of Miss Mary Boyle, a daughter of Admiral Sir Courtenay Boyle. This clever lady had published some verses and tales. She was a friend of Tennyson, of Dickens, of the Brownings,[1] of G. P. R. James, and of other literary people of note.

In announcing the birth of his youngest daughter

[1] Mrs Browning describes Miss Boyle in one of her letters to Miss Mitford. "A kinder, more cordial little creature, full of talent and accomplishment, never had the world's polish upon it. Very amusing, too, she is, and original, and a good deal of laughing she and Robert make between them."—E. D.

to Miss Boyle, Lever styles the baby "another volume added to the domestic history in the duodecimo shape of a daughter. . . . The necessity of quiet," he adds, "the pleasing features of this little place, and the utter dulness of Florence, drove us here. What with horses and dogs and newspapers, books to write and a baby to wait for, our winter has gone over most pleasantly. We had no tramontane wind, no tea-parties, no morning concerts."

In a letter written in 1879, Miss Boyle gives an interesting description of the Irish humourist. She recalls him as "one of the most genial spirits" she had ever met. "His conversation was like summer lightning—brilliant, sparkling, harmless. In his wildest sallies I never heard him give utterance to an unkind thought. He essentially resembled his works, and whichever you preferred, that one was most like Charles Lever. He was the complete type and model of an Irishman—warm-hearted, witty, rollicking, never unrefined, imprudent, often blind to his own interests—adored by his friends, and the playfellow of his children and the gigantic boar-hound he had brought from the Tyrol."

Miss Boyle relates a characteristic anecdote of her highly-lauded friend. One afternoon at her house, where Lever was introduced to Lord and Lady Spencer, the hostess took up a volume of Bret Harte's works, and read aloud one of the parodies of popular authors, selecting the skit in which Lorrequer's early manner is most funnily

burlesqued. Lever enjoyed the recitation, laughing heartily as his tormenter proceeded. He was asked if he could name the author whose work was parodied. "Upon my soul!" said he, "I must have written it myself—it's so like me."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bagni di Lucca, *Feb.* 14, 1849.

"Chapman and I, without any formal document, have already come to an understanding respecting the [? copyrights], should we be successful in obtaining the books. There will be many points to arrange finally between us, — some of them nice ones,—inasmuch that of 'O'Leary' I possess the sole copyright; but from his previous honourable dealings and his general character for fairness, I anticipate no difficulty whatever in establishing a perfectly just and equitable transaction. For my future advantage I should rather that Chapman had these copyrights in his hands, even though I never were to benefit one shilling by their sale, because it secures to me—what in these eventful and changing times is of paramount importance—a permanent demand for my labour. Hence my anxiety, hence all my eagerness, that he and not another should be the purchaser.

"My wife and baby are doing most favourably. The latter promises to be the prettiest of the lot, and the others are growing up handsome. Julia is very nearly as tall as myself, and a fine and high-spirited happy-minded girl. Charley promises to be very clever, and Pussy—No 3—

a most gifted child, requiring all our care to keep her faculties from running wild.

"We are in full revolution here. The Grand Duke has fled. The usual farce of a provisional government elected: forced loans—bankruptcy—brigandage, are all at work, and we look for pillage and the barricades. But somehow, like eels getting used to be skinned, one begins nowadays to get indifferent to carnage and rapine, and to think that grape and canister are among the compliments of the season.

"I send off my bulletin to 'The Mail' from time to time, and I wrote a long paper on Italy in the last 'University Magazine.'

"I am heartily glad you like 'Roland,' which I hope is better than its predecessors.

"'Con Cregan' is a secret, and I hope will remain so. It is atrociously careless and ill-written, but its success depending on what I know to be its badness, my whole aim has been to write down to my public.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Bagni di Lucca, *April* 17, 1849.

"I confess myself at a dead loss what to counsel. My only opinion (and I have come to it after much thought) is this:—

"In the event of Chapman consenting to advance the sum and not succeeding — or in the case of his unwillingness to make such proposal,— I would at once [? dispose of] the copyrights in the usual formal manner, but would take no steps

by newspaper advertisement, inasmuch as this would give the impression of illegality on our part.

"It would be also well to ascertain if we could not restrain any future sale of stock at depreciated prices. If this required a Chancery order, I would be slow to resort to such means for fear of [? legal] expense.

"Chapman, from whom I had a letter two days ago, thinks that it is the stock and not the copyrights that Curry is now negotiating, but he owns himself baffled by the roguery of this conduct.

"Do you think that anything would be obtained by my going over to Ireland? . . . I am really exhausted in resources, and can add nothing to this.

"I am very uneasy about my insurances: my means of late — although working an opposition coach to myself—are very considerably diminished (political causes having damaged book-writing to a fearful extent), so that I wish to know have you anything of mine to meet the Globe policy, and whether at next period of payment the Guardian will be able to meet its own demand on the accumulated profits?

"I ask this now, but I regret to say that it will puzzle me sorely what to do if I am called upon, but I ought to learn it in time, so as to make what provision I can.

"All post communications with England ceased for eleven days during the Genoa insurrection. . . .

"The mail-boats were twice burned going from this, and I (with my accustomed luck) lost a

whole number of 'Roland Cashel'—twelve days' work, of which I have, of course, not a note or memorandum. The proof of 'Con' is also lost, so that if it appears next month it will be with all the printer's imperfections as well as my own.

"I have met with the accompanying advertisement [from a tutor]. Could you find out who he is, what he is like, and if he would feel inclined to reside on the Continent? . . . I am sorely in want of some means of educating the children, who are far more intelligent than instructed.

"The political reaction here is complete: the Grand Duke very soon will be expected back again, and Italy be 'as you were.'

"I wonder if Mr M'Glashan wrote to me, and that his letter has been lost? I asked for proofs of my two papers on Italy, 'Italy and the Italian Tourists,' which I greatly desire to have."

At the Baths of Lucca, in the summer of 1849, Lever was introduced to the Brownings. Mrs Browning's first impression of him is confided to Miss Mitford, in a letter dated August 31, 1849:[1] "A most cordial, vivacious manner, a glowing countenance, with the animal spirits predominant over the intellect, yet the intellect by no means in default; you can't help being surprised into being pleased with him, whatever your previous inclination may be. Natural, too, and a *gentleman* past mistake. His eldest daughter is nearly grown

[1] 'The Letters of Mrs Browning,' edited by Frederic G. Kenyon (Smith, Elder, & Co.)—E. D.

up, and his youngest six months old. He has children of every sort of intermediate age almost, but he himself is young enough still. He seems to have spent nearly his whole life on the Continent, and by no means to be tired of it. Not the slightest Irish accent."[1]

Miss Mitford[2] was a staunch admirer of Lever. "I think him," she said, "one of our best living writers of fiction." She must have expressed her appreciation to Mrs Browning, for the latter writes in the autumn of 1849 to the author of 'Our Village': "I told Mr Lever your opinion of him, dearest friend, and then he said, all in a glow and animation, that you were not only his own delight but the delight of his children, which is affection by refraction, isn't it?" Then follows a further description of the Irish novelist and of his ways. "Not only," says Mrs Browning, "is he the notability *par excellence* of these Baths of Lucca, where he has lived a whole year during the snow upon the mountains, but he presides over the weekly balls at the Casino, where the English do congregate (all except Robert and me), and is said to be the light of the flambeaux and the spring of the dancers. There is a general desolation when he *will* retire to play whist. In

[1] "Lever's accent," according to Major Dwyer, "was *au fond* Dublinian." "He never dropped his Irish manner or his Irish tongue," says Anthony Trollope, who was an excellent judge of Irish manners and dialect. *Tot homines, quot aures!*—E. D.

[2] In 1843 Lever had made in his Magazine a special appeal to his readers to testify their gratitude to the author of 'Our Village,' by subscribing to a fund which had been started for her benefit.—E. D.

addition to which he really seems to be loving and lovable in his family. You always see him with his children and his wife; he drives her and her baby up and down along the only carriageable road of Lucca—so set down that piece of domestic life on the bright side in the broad charge against married authors; now do! I believe he is to return to Florence this winter with his family, having had enough of the mountains."

As he had been the life and soul of social enjoyment at the Baths of Lucca, so was he the life and soul of Anglo-Florentine society when he returned to Florence. One of his numerous friends of the period declares that his appearance in the Cascine always provoked attention. His manner of riding was, if anything, less graceful than it used to be in his Templeogue days, when he clattered into Dublin city: he did not rise in the stirrups, but allowed himself to be jogged up and down like a trooper. Dr Fitzpatrick conjectures that "the shaking to which he surrendered himself was meant as a counter-irritant to sedentary habits." Though at this time he did not speak Italian fluently, he was able to hold his own in the language. Being unlucky enough to embroil himself in a small lawsuit, he decided to conduct his own case. He was warned that this would be courting defeat; but his confidence in himself was unshaken, and not only did he plead his own cause, but he gained a verdict in his favour.

He tells a tale of another case in which (also

pleading his own cause) he did not make so successful an advocate. In front of his Florentine house was a terrace reached by a flight of steps. This was a favourite lounging-place for the novelist. One day his reveries were disturbed by a visitor who presented a bill. The visitor was a tailor, and the bill was a monstrous document. Lever protested vehemently against the charges, and the tailor protested that they were moderate. In his endeavour to convince the novelist of his rectitude, the visitor became wildly excited, and, moving backwards, he fell headlong down the flight of steps. Lever was summoned, and the tailor swore that his accident was due to alarm caused by the threatening manner of the Englishman,—it was owing to his eagerness to escape from assault that he had fallen down the steps. Lever denied that he had done or said anything which would indicate a possible assault. The court inquired how could the defendant account for the panic-stricken condition of the man. "On two grounds," replied Lever, flippantly; "he is a tailor and a Tuscan." Needless to say, the Tuscan court awarded the plaintiff ample damages.

When he released himself from his writing-table, and when he was not riding or driving with his family, he was to be found in the clubs, or in salons, or at receptions at the Grand Duke's. He divided his leisure moments between whist-playing and conversation. Occasionally he danced—when dancing was the order of the night,—his wife, as a general rule, being his

partner. It is said that he was never at his best in the society of literary ladies, and that he was particularly nervous in the company of Mrs Trollope. Possibly he was in dread that this authoress might be taking a leaf out of his own book and endeavouring to make a character sketch of him. "It was amusing," says a friend, "to observe his transparent manœuvrings to avoid Mrs Trollope as a whist-partner; and it was equally amusing to observe Mrs Trollope's undisguised desire to secure Lorrequer as her partner."

XI.

FLORENCE AND SPEZZIA.

1850–1854.

Towards the close of 1849 'Roland Cashel' was published in book form by Messrs Chapman & Hall. It was dedicated to G. P. R. James—"a Roland for your Oliver, or rather for your Step-mother," according to Lever (to whom James had dedicated the last-named novel). The opening of 1850 found the author of 'Roland Cashel' struggling to make headway with a new work of fiction, for which he was troubled not only to find a satisfactory plot but even a satisfactory title. Ere long, however, the story shaped itself, and the title came trippingly — 'Maurice Tiernay, the Soldier of Fortune.' M'Glashan had written to Lever asking him to contribute a new serial to 'The Dublin University'; and choosing to forget his Dublin quarrellings, he agreed to write a novel which would run for twelve or twenty numbers according to the humour, or at the discretion, of the author. He was also busy with 'The Daltons.' 'Maurice Tiernay' was to be a tale of military

adventure, 'The Daltons'—possibly his most ambitious book—a novel of a more homely pattern. The story of the Daltons was a long time in the making. The author employed some of the ideas he had entertained for 'Corrig O'Neill,' the novel which he had abandoned in 1845—most likely because of Miss Edgeworth's objections. He had commenced 'The Daltons' late in 1849. He tells us that it was no labour to sit at his desk for the easy hour and a half which sufficed to carry on his literary labours at this period. The incidents came to him as he required them without effort, and the sayings and doings of his characters afforded him infinite amusement. "Although no longer a young man," he writes, "I had not yet felt one touch of age, nor knew myself other than I was at five-and-twenty; and it was this conscious buoyancy of temperament, joined to a shrewder knowledge of the life, that imparted to me a sense of enjoyment in society for which I have no word but ecstasy. The increasing business of life went on before me like a play in which, if occasionally puzzled by the plot, I could always anticipate the *dénoûment* by my reading of the actors. Such a theatre was Florence in these old grand-ducal times—times which, whatever the political shortcomings, were surrounded with a charm of existence words cannot picture. If it were an obligation on me to relive any portion of my life, I should select this part, even in preference to earlier youth and more hopeful ambitions."

His only anxieties or troubles arose whenever he was suddenly aroused to a knowledge of the fact that money was going out much more rapidly than it was coming in—a discovery which always spurred him to renewed literary exertions.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Ximenes, *Jan.* 14, 1850.

"It is a very short-sighted view of the past year which regards the struggle as one between the principles of Monarchy and Democracy. The real question at issue is the far greater question of Social Equality. It was begun in Switzerland, attempted at Cracow, mooted [?] in Pau, in Vienna, throughout Italy and Germany and Hungary, and is yet in litigation,—with all men to urge and argue it, and with starving half-enlightened millions to drive them forward. Not the least dangerous part of this tremendous commotion is that many worthy and right-minded men wish it success. Some see in it the hope of a grand advance in human happiness and civilisation. Others predict that Protestantism—the religion of liberty and enlightenment—will overcome the old foe of superstition. But all seem to forget to restore order, for chaos is not man's prerogative, and that in every history we read how such convulsion inevitably threw mankind back almost into elemental barbarism, glad even of the refuge of a tyranny against the more cruel dominion of their own passions. Pray, my dear friend, don't set my [? lamentation]

down as a worse evil than what it is intended to typify. And now for ourselves!

"Here we are, with snow a yard deep and the thermometer at 18° to 20° Fahrenheit, and this with Italian houses, marble halls and floors, marble tables, and every accessory for icing poor human nature on a grand scale. We never suffered as much from cold in the Tyrol Alps, for really there is not one single preparation here against it,—and as to fire, I have burned a small forest already.

"Socially we are far worse off than before. The worst feeling exists between the Austrians and the Italians: they seldom meet, and never amicably. The consequence is that few houses are open, and those few admit only a certain set of intimates. The Court, to avoid difficulties, does nothing; and theatres—of which there are seven—every night are deplorably bad. So you can see how dull one can be even in this favoured region. We are, however, all well, and the children not the less happy that sliding and skating replace mere promenading.

"I am in the throes of a new book, of which after a few months' full pondering over I cannot even fix up the name, so that you see I haven't made much progress."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Florence, *Feb.* 2, 1850.

"The enclosed bulky packet—which I need not say is entirely open to you if you care to read it—I want you to negotiate with M'Glashan for 'The

Dublin University Magazine'; the ground of the treaty being that I am to write a serial story, of which this is the opening chapter,[1] [? instalments] of a length varying from 16 to 18 pp. in the Magazine, the copyright of which I am to retain,—the whole to be concluded in twelve or twenty contributions, as we may see best, and for which I ask £20 per sheet, but if obliged will take 16 guineas—terms he offered me before. My plan is a story which, embracing the great changes in the present century, would bring my hero *en scène* in the recent convulsions of the world—in the years '48 and '49."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"FLORENCE, *Feb.* 26, 1850.

"As to his [M'Glashan's] codicil. He knows me by this time well enough to be aware that if he but gives me the wind of a word, I am always ready to pull up short; and if the story should not be found to tell with his readers, I'll make a short yarn of it willingly. Only I beg that I may not be asked to spoil a catastrophe by any abruptness, but get fair notice to shorten sail. . . .

"With 'Tiernay' I may be able to work along in these hard times, when, besides my confoundedly wasteful habits, education—or what affects to be education—for the brats runs away with every sixpence I can make.

"I have said nothing about [using] my name in the M'Glashan compact, because as he does not in

[1] 'Maurice Tiernay.'

the Magazine append other names, he will not of course do so with mine. But in any other way I have no desire to blink the authorship, intending, as I do, to make the story as interesting as I am able.

"In another six weeks we shall be in the mountains,—in our old delightful quarters at the Bagni di Lucca,—where cheapness and glorious scenery are happy associates.

"I have not heard more of the notices of my book in 'The Dublin University Magazine,' and now that a new contribution of mine will appear there, it would be too late, and look too like a puff, to print a critique on me in the same sheet with myself. Tell M'Glashan that however anxious [? I may be] for a review, I'd rather forgo it now than incur such a malapropos.

"I have repeated assurances sent special to me of the high estimate of my books entertained by the directors of 'The Quarterly,' but from some underhand proceeding — some secret influence of whose machinery I can obtain no information— they never have noticed me publicly. I have been given to understand that the Dickens and Thackeray cliques have conspired to this end. Of course I have never hinted this to any one, nor shown any feeling on the subject, but the injury is considerable even in a pecuniary point.

"You would scarcely believe how much I have sacrificed in not being a regular member of the Guild of Letters, — dining at the Athenæum, getting drunk at The Garrick, supping with

'Punch,' and steaming down to a Whitebait feed at Blackwall with reporters, reviewers, and the other [? acolytes] of the daily press. This you will say is no such fascinating society. Very true; but it pays — or, what is worse, nothing else will pay. The 'Pressgang' take care that no man shall have success independent of them. Or if he do— *gare à lui*—let him look to himself!

"I am now cudgelling my brains about a new story for Chapman, to be called 'The Daltons, or, Three Roads in Life,' in which I have attempted—God knows with what chance of success!—the quiet homely narrative style of German romance-writers. I shall be very anxious to know what you will think of it, and you shall see the first No. as soon as it is printed.

"Scott says that to write well you must write unceasingly, and that the well of imagination does not go dry from exhaustion but from want of pumping. Mine is not likely to fail if I only intend to keep bread in our mouths."

The circle of Anglo-Florentine society was widened in 1850 by the advent of Richard Lalor Shiel,[1]

[1] Richard Lalor Shiel had enjoyed a checkered career. He had studied for the Catholic priesthood. Then, with a view to the Bar, he entered Trinity College. When he was only about twenty years of age he wrote a tragedy. He followed this up with other plays, the most popular being "Evadne, or the Statue." In 1822 he was called to the Bar. In the same year he allied himself with Daniel O'Connell. He entered Parliament in 1831. Later he was Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and subsequently Master of the Mint. Gladstone, in 1877, described Shiel as "a great orator with a very fervid imagination and an enormous power of language and strong feeling."—E. D.

who came to Florence as British Minister. In Ireland Lever and Shiel had been bitterly opposed to each other, but meeting in a foreign city, their political animosities were forgotten, and they fraternised as Irish exiles and Irish humourists. Lever enjoyed wit as keenly as whist; and he declared that Shiel had lost none of his wit by being transplanted, and that he could make a *bon mot* in French with as much readiness and grace as he could make one in English. Shiel, unfortunately, had a short tenure of office in Florence. He died suddenly in 1851.

Another of Lever's Irish friends of this period was Catharine Hayes: a biographical sketch of the famous soprano appeared in 'The Dublin University' for November 1850.

'Maurice Tiernay' commenced its magazine career in May 1850. The story bore no author's name, but the authorship must have been more than suspected by the readers of 'The Dublin University.' Lever was very diligent during this year. In addition to 'Tiernay' he had 'The Daltons' in hand. M'Glashan was anxious to procure short contributions from the busy man's pen. He applied to him for a memoir of Samuel Lover,[1] but Lever declined to undertake anything so onerous as biography. Failing to obtain this memoir, M'Glashan inquired if Lever would furnish materials for a sketch of the author of 'Harry Lorrequer.' But Lorrequer was

[1] The memoir of the author of 'Handy Andy'—a brief one—was written by another hand: it appeared in the D. U. M. for February 1851.—E. D.

not to be drawn. He explained that though his taste was sufficiently gross to crave laudation, he would be expected to enter into a defence of his Irish character-sketching, and this he would not do. "I will not be a sign-post to myself," he wrote. "Like old Woodcock in the play, my cry is—'No money till I die.'"

Writing to Miss Mitford, in November 1850, Mrs Browning makes a sad complaint of the Irish novelist. "We never see him," she says; "it is curious. He made his way to us with the sunniest of faces and the cordialest of manners at Lucca; and I, who am much taken by manner, was quite pleased with him, and wondered why it was that I didn't like his books. Well, he only wanted to see that we had the right number of eyes and no odd fingers. Robert, in return for his visit, called on him three times, I think, and I left my card on Mrs Lever; but he never came again. He had seen enough of us, he could put down in his private diary that we had neither claw nor tail,—and there an end, properly enough. In fact, he lives a different life from ours; he is in the ball-room and we in the cave,—nothing could be more different; and perhaps there are not many subjects of common interest between us."

Mrs Browning was unquestionably and not unreasonably offended. In a later letter to Miss Mitford, railing against English society, she says: "People in Florence come together to gamble or dance, and if there's an end, why, so much the better; but there's *not* an end in most cases, by

any manner of means, and against every sort of innocence. Mind, I imply nothing about Mr Lever, who lives irreproachably with his wife and family, rides out with his children in a troop of horses to the Cascine, and yet is as social a person as his joyous temperament leads him to be. But we live in a cave, and peradventure he is afraid of the damp of us."[1]

The only plausible explanation of Lever's neglect of the Brownings is that he did not feel quite at ease in the presence of the author of 'Aurora Leigh.' When he sought mental relaxation, after a hard day's work, he sought it in the society of those who were content to listen to his agreeable rattle rather than in the society of those to whom he should lend his ears. He was by no means insensible to feminine charms, mental or physical. He gloried in praise coming from the mouths of intellectual women. But the woman of genius was not the comrade he coveted in his hours of ease: the companionship of men—of good talkers or good listeners—was what he craved. He had a peculiar reverence for women. He idealised the gentler sex: his heroines are refined, beautiful, pure. He abhorred the intricacies of sexuality in fiction as strongly as he abhorred modern "sensationalism." Feminine intellectuality of the most exalted type did not attract him — possibly because it was likely to freeze the genial current of his conversation.

[1] Dr Fitzpatrick asserts in his 'Life of Lever' that Lever was intimately associated with the Brownings in Florence, and "found a real charm in the companionship." And pity 'tis 'tis untrue!—E. D.

The opening of the New Year—1851—did not bring monetary relief. He invited M'Glashan to make him an offer for the copyright of 'Maurice Tiernay,' and he told him that he was willing to contribute a new serial to the Magazine when 'Tiernay' had run its course. 'The Daltons' was still moving slowly along. Mortimer O'Sullivan wrote encouragingly about this novel. Adverting to O'Sullivan's favourable criticism, the author said that his own feeling was, he had spent too much time dallying among the worthless characters. For this he had an apology to offer—namely, that the good people in the book were fictitious, while the unworthy ones were drawn from life.

M'Glashan was slow to reply, and Lever bombarded him for remittances, vowing that he was so crippled for want of cash that he could not put any heart into his work. It was almost impossible, he declared, to retrench in Florence, "where" (he somewhat naïvely observes) "we have lived in the best, and consequently in the most expensive, set. To leave it would incur great expense. . . . I am alternately fretting, hoping, riding, dining, and talking away,—to all seeming the most easy-minded of mortals; but, as Hood said, sipping champagne on a tight-rope."

But whether you feel angry with him for his improvidence, or whether you are moved to compassion by contemplating his difficulties, you cannot help smiling at his excuses or parables. A friend upon one solemn occasion tendered advice on the score of his extravagance. He pointed

out that Lever kept too many horses and too many servants, gave too many dinners, and played too highly at cards. The friend—a personage—wound up his homily by saying, "Begin your reformation with small economies." The novelist determined to economise, and he tried to think where it would be easiest to begin. He racked his brain throughout the night in the endeavour to hit upon a starting-point in the proposed career of reformation. At length a happy thought occurred to him. He was in the habit of indulging in pistol-practice at a shooting-gallery, and he used to give a franc to a man who held his horse while he was amusing himself in the gallery. Now it would be an admirable effort in the scheme of economy to do away with the splendour of hiring a man to hold his horse. Henceforth he would fasten the bridle to one of the hooks of the jalousies. When he arrived next morning at the gallery the man who usually held the horse was in waiting. Lever informed him that he did not require his services. The dismay of the man smote the economist to the heart, but he had been told that he might expect to endure many pangs in the effort to inaugurate the campaign of frugality. He hitched his horse to the hook, shamefacedly, and entered the gallery. The effort to economise steeled his nerves, and at the first shot he hit the centre of the target. This excellent example of shooting had the effect of ringing a bell denoting the triumph of the marksman. The bell startled the horse outside,

and the animal broke away, "carrying the window-frame with him," according to Lever. "Altogether," he says, "the repairs amounted to eighty-seven francs. . . . This was my first and last attempt at economy."

A small turn of fortune's wheel cheered him in March. A man to whom he had loaned a considerable sum of money gave him a series of bills which he managed to discount at a large sacrifice for cash. During the same month a trouble, not of his own making, disturbed him —the threat of a fresh outbreak in Florence. This, however, blew over, and he was able to continue his literary labour until the heat of August drove him, limp and desk-weary, from the Tuscan capital.

He turned his steps towards Spezzia (destined to be his official place of residence at a later period), and here he enjoyed to its full extent the luxury of lotus-eating. He offered a deaf ear to appeals for "copy." He could do nothing, he told his publishers, except to sit on the rocks with his children and dream away the whole day. When he did arouse himself from this form of lethargy, it was only to indulge in another variety of *dolce far niente*—swimming. One day he was aroused from a half dream, as he lay floating on the bosom of the bay, by the sting of an electric-fish. His arm became swollen and inflamed, and he suffered excruciating pain. Leeching and blistering, and subsequently massage, pulled him through, but left him weak and querulous.

"The piano-playing, guitar-twanging, sol-fahing, and yelling" which went on at his hotel drove him out of Spezzia in September.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Capponi, Florence,
Nov. 21, 1851.

"'Maurice Tiernay' being completed, I want to know how I stand. If I remember aright, M'Glashan advanced me £60 here, and paid two other sums for insurance, amounting to about £160 or £170 more, leaving a surplus sufficient, I hope, for the accruing insurance of next Xmas. In addition to this I have proposed to him to purchase out my copyright of 'Tiernay,' to which he replied by stating that he is 'engaged in making certain calculations on the subject, and will give me the result in a speedy letter.' Now I am so aware of his procrastinations that I would rather intrust the negotiations to you, and ask of you to find out his resolve and let me hear it. I want to learn if he desires another serial from me, to begin about the same month as before—April. If so (and that he makes me any acceptable offer about the copyright of 'Tiernay'), I would wish to know if he would feel disposed to take the story altogether off my hands at once,—I mean, to give me a certain monthly sum for the tale, surrendering my copyright, so that I should attain no subsequent lien upon it, my object being to have a little more money for present purposes, which the education of my children and other outlays render needful.

"Even with both oars [this refers to 'The Daltons'] I have barely kept my bark in motion for the past year, and these anxious inquiries will show you how anxious I feel about the year to come. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ* thus tormenting of you!

"With so much of actual Peter Daltonism in my own affairs, I have little courage to ask you what you think of my fictitious woes, but I hope you go with me in the chief views I take of priestly craft and priestly political meddling. O'Sullivan writes me many encouraging things about the story generally, and in parts; and I believe it is not worse than some, and is better than many of its fellows, — its chief errors (which I see too late) being an undue dalliance among the more worthless *dramatis personæ*, and less stress consequently on the better features of the piece. More of Nelly and less of Haggerstone & Coy. would have been better. My own apology is, I have lived only among the Haggerstone class latterly, and that Nelly is pure fiction while the others are naked facts,—indeed they are portraits drawn from the life, and in some cases so close as to make the original manifestly uneasy.

"'Tiernay' is of course a poor performance—sketchy-meat [? or meal] and skim-milky; but here, again, I am ready with an excuse. I cannot be good for £20 a sheet!—just as I should revoke if I played whist for shilling points.

"O'Sullivan wishes me to take time for a really good effort in three vols., and so on. But how am

I to live meanwhile? While I am training for the match I'll die of hunger.

"As to a new M'Glashan serial, I have a thing *en tête* that would do; but of course he would trust me as to my giving him value without any question as to the colour of the cloth. Believe me, my dear friend, that if I knew how, I should not have inflicted upon you all this surplus labour nor given you more of my tiresomeness than you see in my red-bound Nos. illustrated by Phiz. But so it is: an author is an unlucky friend, whether it be his life or works that are under consideration."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Florence, *Dec.* 24, 1851.

"As to the 'Tiernay' copyright, it is somewhat equivocal in him [M'Glashan] to talk to me for three months of calculations and then ask a proposition from me. Now such is my necessity that I will take absolutely anything for it. If he thinks £200 too much, then £150—nay £100—say one hundred, as Mr [O'] Connell observed. I repeat, my urgent necessity is such that I would make any sacrifice for the use of that sum at once. I leave it to your diplomacy to make the proposal in any shape you can,—the great object being M'Glashan's permission to draw on him at three months for whatever he may deem the suitable price. You will see, my dear friend, that I am driven to my last resources—and for this reason: that at this season a deluge of duns await me, who, whatever their forbearance before, give me no

quarter at the end of the year. I need not tell you, then, that days are very precious to me. I have no occasion to stimulate your kindness and affection. I am overdrawn with Chapman, and have actually no immediate resource, this procrastination of M'Glashan from the early part of October last having occupied me with the hopes of a settlement, and thus taken me off the track by which I might possibly have extricated myself.

"As to the future, let us, if he will, renew the old contract—£20 per sheet; and I will begin with the April quarter—if I don't jump into the Arno before—a brand new serial as jocose and comical as can well be expected from a mind so thoroughly easy and well-to-do as mine. I will complete it in twelve or twenty parts monthly, and it shall be at his discretion to say which. I cannot yet give him the text, because I am vacillating between two themes,—and to predict a plan is with me to make the whole effort pall and disgust me. So much so is this the case, that when the children guess a *dénoûment* that I intend, I am never able to write it after; and when you read this to M'Glashan he will recognise a fact that he knew well once, though he may have forgotten it. If I am to go to work, let him tell me this,—or, rather, let him tell you at once,—for our Carnival begins here next week, and for a month at least all quiet and repose is at an end, but still I could pick up some of the raw material for future fabrication.

"Now, my dear friend, for my first proposition, *l'affaire* Tiernay. Get me something — anything —out of him. Let me know M'Glashan's reply to the new Story proposal as soon as he can make up his mind, but *do not wait for the answer* if you have any tidings for me *re* 'Tiernay.'

"My little people are all well,—and this, thank God, is a piece of good fortune that goes far to reconcile me to many a hard rub."

Early in 1852 Lever heard of the tragic fate of his friend Eliot Warburton, who had perished in the *Amazon*, the ill-starred steamer which was burned on her voyage to the west coast of America. Warburton had made Lever's acquaintance through sending to the editor of 'The Dublin University' some brilliant sketches of travel: these were published in the Magazine in 1843, under the title of 'Episodes of Eastern Travel.' Subsequently the author of 'The Crescent and the Cross' was a guest at Templeogue, and Lever entertained for him the warmest feelings. Warburton's violent end, following closely upon the sudden death of Shiel,—who was to have dined with Lever the very day of his death,—gave the novelist a rude shock. He indulged in some very gloomy moralisings about the uncertainty of all human things, and engineered himself into a state in which work was impossible. In February he thought a journey southwards might give him a mental fillip which he sadly needed. He paid his first visit to Rome, his wife and children

accompanying him. The daily expenditure increased seven-fold: but had he not forsworn small economies?

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Hôtel de Minerva, Rome,
Feb. 24, 1852.

"As to the tale for the Magazine. If left entirely to myself as to place, &c., I could begin about the June or July No., but as yet my ideas are in anything but a story-telling vein. My head is actually whirling with its sound of odd and incongruous associations — the ancient Rome of statues and temples jostling with the modern one of bonbons and *confetti*,—for it is the height of the Carnival, and the population has gone clean mad with tomfoolery.

"Old Rome is infinitely grander than I looked for,—the Colosseum and the Pantheon far beyond all I could conceive.

"We stay only a few days and then on to Naples —to see that (*e poi?*), then back to Florence, for the expense is ruinous. The hotels are crammed; and as we are all here, and what with ciceroni, carriage hire, &c., every day is like a week of common living.

"This would do very well if I could afford it. There is everything to make this a place of intense interest, but one defect as a place of residence is insuperable—it cannot be inhabited in the summer months."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *April* 3, 1852.

"I write to know in case of need whether the Guardian Office would advance me a sum of £300 to £500 on my policy for £1500, the annual payments being now completed? I have received certain offers from America—on a literary point—which might, or might not, be worth serious consideration, but they all entail the necessity of residence in the States, and consequently a degree of preliminary expense of a serious amount. I am very far from wishing for any arrangement which as a necessary step includes banishment, and this America is, in my estimation. But in my position, and with my prospects, bread is the first requisite.

"I submitted, through O'Sullivan, a plan of a serial to M'Glashan, but have not yet received a reply.

"Do not mention to any one my American project, as nothing but direst stress of circumstances would induce me to think of it."

About this time he forwarded to Mortimer O'Sullivan the plan of a new serial which he was anxious to negotiate with 'The Dublin University.' This was 'Sir Jasper Carew.' He was busy, too, evolving the plot of a new book to follow 'The Daltons,' and to be published in monthly parts by Chapman & Hall. He could not raise any money on this until at least he had got the story under

way. M'Glashan was growing more and more dilatory in the matter of payments, and Lever was on tenter-hooks, anticipating a fresh and an accentuated attack of impecuniosity.

Hampered with his private troubles, mostly pecuniary, and with the burden of his literary engagements, the undaunted novelist presently hoisted another pack on his shoulders—the championship of Tuscany. Early in 1852 he contributed two political papers to 'The Dublin University,'—one on "Lord Palmerston and Our Policy in the Mediterranean," the other on "Great Britain and Italy." He insisted that Austria was at the bottom of grave mischief in the Italian peninsula, and that her designs upon Tuscany were base and tyrannical, and prejudicial to British interests. "If this beautiful country be worth preserving," he writes, "it behoves our new Foreign Secretary so to act that Englishmen may not be obliged to exclaim, 'Would that we had Lord Palmerston back again!'" These articles attracted the notice of Lord Palmerston, and Sir E. Bulwer-Lytton (who was Attaché at Florence) informed Lever of this fact, but the whimsical publicist was not hopeful that his attacks upon Austria's growing domination in Italy would advance him in the good graces of the then Foreign Secretary, Lord Malmesbury. However, later in the year the Conservative party, conceiving a scheme for the establishment in London of an inspired Tory organ, cast its eye upon Charles Lever as a likely editor, and the novelist voyaged to England in order to discuss the project

with Lord Lyndhurst. Major Dwyer furnished Dr Fitzpatrick with some notes purporting to be Lever's account of his London experiences. He was shown into a room where Lord Lyndhurst was seated at one end of a long table. At once he was seized with the impression that "the wonderful old man" was one with whom it would be dangerous to trifle, so he decided to speak with as much brevity and as little levity as possible. "Well, Mr Lever," said his lordship, "what principles do you propose for the direction of our press at this time?" "As much good sense, my lord," said the novelist, "as the party will bear." Evidently the Minister was pleased with the reply. "That will do, Mr Lever, that will do," he said. Lord Ellenborough (or Lord Redesdale), however, was not so easily satisfied with Lever's vague political programme.

During his stay in London he visited Thackeray, who sought to dissuade him from entering the ranks of journalism, assuring him that in his opinion the author of 'Charles O'Malley' would not be in his right place as the editor of an English political organ. Finally the project was abandoned by the leaders of the Conservative party, and Lever, considerably disappointed,—for he felt that his love of politics and his wide knowledge of political life would enable him to shine as a political writer, and eventually to become a force in politics,—returned to Italy.

A practical joke which Lorrequer played shortly after his resignation of 'The Dublin University'

caused some trouble more than six years after date. In the Magazine, early in 1846, there appeared "Lines by G. P. R. James" entitled "A Cloud is on the Western Sky." The verses were prefaced by a note: "My dear L——, I send you the song you wished to have. The Americans totally forgot, when they so insolently calculated upon aid from Ireland in a war with England, that their own apple is rotten at the core. A nation with five or six millions of slaves who would go to war with an equally strong nation with no slaves is a mad people.—Yours, G. P. R. James." "The Cloud" (amongst other things not intended to be pleasant to Americans) called upon the dusky millions to "shout," and the author of the "Lines" declared that Britain was ready to draw the sword in the sacred cause of liberty. 'The Dublin University' must have had a circulation in the States, and the readers of it across the Atlantic had longer memories than Lever wotted. When his friend James was appointed British Consul at Richmond, Virginia, in 1852, an attempt was made to expel him from the country. The cause of the aversion to the British Consul was the "Cloud is on the Western Sky." James had never even heard of this rhythmical irritant, and fortunately he was able to convince indignant American patriots that he was not the author of the poem. When Lever heard of the *contretemps* he exclaimed: "God forgive me! it was my doing; but I had no more notion that 'James's powder' could stir up national animosity than that Holloway's ointment

could absorb a Swiss glacier." It is pleasant to note that the belated discovery of this extraordinary joke did not create any ill-feeling between the two novelists.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"FLORENCE, *Oct.* 30, 1852.

"I am glad you like 'The Dodds.' I tried it as a vehicle for all manner of opinions and criticisms—of course as often fanciful as real—on all manner of things. Kenny Dodd is of course the *cheval de bataille* of the performance, and by him and his remarks I hope to make the whole readable.

"Of Charlie I have the very best account. He is a very quiet boy, and with great energy of character, half smothered by the indolence of foreign life and habits; but once in a position to display his abilities, I have few fears of the result.

"I can speak with even more confidence of his honourable and straightforward character, nor have I one uncomfortable thought as to any action he may commit. Ever since he has been away his letters have convinced me that my confidence is not misplaced, and my chief regret regarding him is that my scanty means have reduced me to send him to Armagh *vice* Eton or Harrow, and that I must give him classics with a brogue."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"CASA CAPPONI, FLORENCE, *June* 30, 1852.

"My present difficulties, which are considerable, are owing in great part to a delay (by Chapman's

fault) in the publication of a new serial story. It was to have begun immediately after 'The Daltons' finished, but by a number of mischances has been deferred, and will now probably be still longer put off, as the dog-days are death to literature, and the Literophobia is the malady in season. Meanwhile, if the public are not devouring my writings *I* am, and at the present moment have already eaten the first three numbers.

"I feel, and have long felt, the force of the argument as to residence in or near England, and probably were it not for a letter that I received yesterday, would have increased my loan from the Guardian to convey us all to Ireland. Indeed, such was my full and firm resolve when I last wrote to you. Yesterday, however, there came a letter from Whiteside (in reply to one of mine asking to make use of his influence to obtain for me some diplomatic or consular appointment abroad), in which he says that he made the application, and it was well received,—my claims being recognised and my name put down in Lord Malmesbury's list. Of course there is nothing now for it but Patience and Hope—or at least the former; and happily if experience in life is not favourable to Hope, it makes some compensation by installing Patience.

"I have no heart to talk about story-telling nor mix up troubles with my own. Mayhap, however, M'Glashan may supply me with an additional trait to make up my portrait of The Grinder.

"The account of the Clermont affair reads pleasantly, but now I wish not to tell the terms,

but to wait to have a look at the probable tenant. These dodges do not require Italian experience to see through,—though I must say that the man who lets Paddy cheat him after five years' residence at this side of the Alps, has eaten his macaroni to very little profit,—the finesse and tact of roguery here being to all ordinary rascality in the ratio of 1000 to 1.

"Can you give me any idea when the new Parliament will meet? If I go to London, I should like to be there then."

The official notice taken of him by the leaders of the Conservative party encouraged Lever to hope that high things were in store for him. The alarming feature was that the Derby Administration was crumbling: he could expect nothing from the Whigs; so that if anything was to be done, he told himself that "'twere well 'twere done quickly." At this time there was a project in the air which interested him immensely,—a project to establish diplomatic relations between England and Rome. Lever made a journey to Rome in November, and obtained from Sir Henry Bulwer (afterwards Lord Dalling) some information which he sent, in the form of a letter, to 'The Dublin University.' The conductor of the Magazine was aghast at the idea of establishing a British Embassy at the Court of Pius IX., and though he published Lever's communication,[1] he prefaced it

[1] "Diplomatic Relations with Rome." 'The Dublin University Magazine' for December 1852.—E. D.

with an editorial statement that the Magazine was in no way responsible for the sentiments or opinions expressed in the letter signed "C. L." "As a temporal power," quoth the editor, "the Court of Rome, without army, navy, wealth, commerce, or numbers, is in all respects too helpless and beggarly to afford us the faintest shadow of a pretext for establishing a diplomatic intimacy with it." Lever's argument was that there was nothing in the project which should offend or alarm Protestanism. He goes on to say that it would not be necessary to establish a resident Papal minister at St James's. The real object was that England should be represented at the Vatican, and that the principal business of the mission would be to enlighten the Papacy upon the condition of political and social affairs in Ireland. Very possibly Lever considered that he would be "The Man for Rome."

The break-up of the Derby Administration in December 1852 gave Lever pause, and threw him back upon his literary work and upon the pleasures of the card-table. Baron Erlanger testifies to the overpowering influence which the game of whist had upon the master of Casa Capponi. "Many a time," says the Baron, "have I travelled to his charming little cottage near Florence. On opening the gate we already heard his gay voice, laughing or talking. Officially we came to play whist. . . . He loved his literary pursuits, of course, but no panegyric about his last book would have given him as much satisfaction as an

acknowledgment of his superiority at whist. He loved the game beyond anything. To us, I confess, the cards were a mere pretext. It was not one of these dire sittings when the cards are gravely dealt and every point is scored in dead silence. A continuous roar of laughter accompanied the game. . . . His wit and humour never lacked for a moment a continuous cross-fire of *bon mots*, unprepared and spontaneous. His extraordinary memory always astonished us." Sir Hamilton Seymour bears testimony to Lever's wonderful brilliancy as a table-talker. Once he said to the novelist, "Try to write that anecdote just as you have told it." "Ah," replied Lever, "it can't be done that way. All the ingenious contrivances ever invented could not impart to a bottle of Vichy or Carlsbad the freshness of the water as it sparkled from the fountain."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"FLORENCE, *April* 11, 1853.

"I have had a strange half-gouty attack that has put me out of sorts for the last few days, but I am again at work and trying to get 'The Dodds' out of Baden. I hope you like it, and that the characters appear to you each marked and distinguished.

"Politically we are expecting great things, for if any breach of the peace occurs in Europe, all Italy will be in arms against the Austrians in twenty-four hours."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"FLORENCE, *June* 25, 1853.

"Charlie has just reached us in perfect health and spirits, and already told us of all your kindness to him, and at a time, too, when your anxieties were so deeply engaged about your own boy. My best wishes go with him, and I fervently trust he may meet fortune and happiness in the world beyond the seas,—for, indeed, I can no longer see what is open to any of us in this quarter. Could I recall twenty years of life I'd emigrate tomorrow.

"I find Charlie greatly grown and in full strength and vigour, but I am sorely puzzled as to his future; and in reality in this old system of Latin and Greek education I neither perceive any impulse given to intellectual development, nor any solid groundwork of knowledge. I follow it, however, as I would go with a current. *Voilà tout!*

"I have had four days of bad gout—stomach and knees alternately attacked. I'm now better, though terribly depressed and very weak.

"We are in all the anxieties of a great crisis, and every one asks, Shall we have war? I believe Russia has advanced to the present position in full reliance that we and France never can act in concert, and bases all her hopes on racial and irreconcilable grudges. If we do agree, certes nothing can resist us; but the hypothetical 'if' is all the question. I enclose this hurriedly to go with a M'Glashan packet of 'Jasper.'"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Spezzia, *Aug.* 22, 1853.

"Your letter reached me in the very nick of a negotiation of which Charley was the object. The Messrs Sandell, the Engineers to whom the Tuscan and some other of the Italian railroads have been conceded, have made me an offer to take him as a pupil and make him a C.E. I hesitated when first the proposition reached me, and I thought it was possible he might possess talents likely to win college honours and distinction, and make a fair chance of what follows on them. I find that this is less likely than I had believed; that his natural indolence requires the spur of a personal interest to stimulate it,—and this probably a real career may effect. He certainly likes the notion greatly, and appears as if the choice was really what he himself would have made. I accepted, therefore, and he does not return to Ireland. God grant that I may have done wisely what I have done maturely and after much reflection.

"I shall be chargeable with Charley's expenses for two years certain; after that I hope he will contribute to them himself. Though it was certainly advisable he should have encountered the rough-and-tumble of a school, yet probably I should not have incurred the great outlay had I anticipated only this opening. However, it may be all for the best.

"In my career through life I have made what are popularly called many valuable acquaintances, but I can safely aver that I could not to-morrow get my

son made a policeman or letter-carrier, with all my fine friends and titled associates, and the offer of Messrs Sandell is the one solitary instance of a kindness in this wise I have ever met with. From what Mr S. tells me, I shall have to pay something like a hundred per annum for a couple of years. He will be stationed in Italy at various places, and Cha. will be at his headquarters, wherever that may be.

"J. Sandell is a pupil of Stevenson, and reputed to be a man of great knowledge of his profession. His offer to me was spontaneous and made in the most flattering manner, so that, everything considered, I should feel that I was not doing a prudent thing to reject it.

"Cha. tells me that Guillemand at the most can only take a quarter's salary for want of a previous notice of withdrawal, but I should deem him exceedingly shabby if he wanted *that*. . . .

"We are here boating and bathing and swimming and salting ourselves all day long. It is the most enjoyable spot of the most enjoyable land, and we have a house five miles distant from any other, on the edge of the sea, and approachable only by boat. I cannot, however, write a line, for our whole time is spent on the water. What's to be done with K. J. and Mrs D., Heaven knows!

"I suppose you may have seen Maxwell. He is, or ought to be, in Ireland by this time. This affair of Charles was only decided upon this afternoon, and I don't lose a post in letting you know about it.

"I am greatly pleased at your opinion of 'The Dodds,' since through all its absurdity of incident and situation I have endeavoured to convey whatever I know of life and the world. I by no means intend to endorse as my own every judgment of K. J., but I mean that many of his remarks are, so far as I am capable of saying, just and correct, and when he does blunder, it is only for the sake of preserving that species of characteristic which should take off any appearance of dogmatism or pretension when speaking of more important subjects.

"As to the [? criticism] about foreigners and the Continent generally, I assure you I have not the courage to tell the things that have come under my own notice, while foreign notions of England are equally, if not more, ridiculous. I am quite prepared to hear 'genteel people' call K. J. very low and his family vulgar, but if so, I am consoled by the fact that it has touched the sore places in some snobbish nature; and in all ranks and conditions of our countrymen snobbery is the great prevailing vice. I am meanwhile amusing myself jotting down on paper the things which have so often afforded me real fun to contemplate in the world, —and so far from high colouring, my great effort is to tone down the picture to the sombre tints of verisimilitude and probability."

In October the weather made boating a somewhat dangerous pastime. In reply to M'Glashan's stereotyped complaint that Lever was "huddling

his castastrophes," the novelist playfully replied that "a smashing Levanter" had half-filled his boat with water one day, and all but closed the career of the author of 'Sir Jasper Carew' "without a huddle." He begged M'Glashan to give himself a breathing-time, to clear his head by inhaling some fresh Italian air, to visit Florence and discuss with the author of 'Sir Jasper' the best means of putting the hero to bed. But M'Glashan could not be inveigled into the paying of a visit to the novelist; nor could he be induced to furnish Lever with the long letters which at one time had helped to keep him in touch with literary life in Ireland and elsewhere. The fact was that M'Glashan was beginning to break down.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Florence, *Nov.* 24, 1853.

"A very strange, but I fear impracticable, offer has come to me from the United States, which I have sent to O'Sullivan for his counsel, to be then forwarded to John. . . .

"Meanwhile—and to be in a measure prepared for the future—I want you to do a bit of diplomacy for me. My story of 'Carew' will finish in March, when 'The Dodds' also will close; and as Chapman & Hall contemplate the new issue of my older books, I suspect they will not be disposed to engage me contemporaneously with a new work, so that I shall be suddenly without any engagement in London or Dublin. What I want is,

therefore, that you should sound M'Glashan as to a new serial story,—to be published by him both in the Magazine and in monthly numbers, as he did with 'O'Malley,' and *with my name.* I want the thing done adroitly, as if the notion originated with you, and so that, if he approved, you could then suggest it to me. If he said Yes, we could then talk of terms. At all events, you could say that an offer of American origin had been made to me, and if this (the serial) could be managed, *you* would rather have it than the Transatlantic project."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Hôtel d'Odessa, Spezzia, *Dec.* 20, 1853.

"You write (as I am accustomed to feel) soberly and seriously. But there is this difference between us: you have borne the heavy burden of a long life of labour with noble earnestness and self-denial; I have, on the contrary, only to look back upon great opportunities neglected and fair abilities thrown away, capacity wasted, and a whole life squandered. Yet if it were not for the necessity that has kept me before the world, perhaps I should have sunk down wearied and exhausted long ago: but as the old clown in the circus goes on grinning and grimacing even when the chalk won't hide his wrinkles, so do I make a show of light-heartedness I have long ceased to feel, or, what is more, to wish for!

"If I had the choice given me I'd rather be

forsaken by my creditors than remembered by my friends.

"I am glad you like 'Carew.' It was more than pleasant to me to write it. What a strange confession, is it not?—as though saying that when an author came to take pleasure in his own book, he was reduced to the condition of a bear who loved sucking his own paw.

"We have come here to pass the winter, for though intrinsically little cheaper than Florence, as we are all driven to a hotel, we have got rid of horses and stable expenses altogether. Our economy up to this has not done much, but even a little seems to encourage, and I suppose that thrift is one of those remedies that requires to be introduced gradually into the system.

"I scribble a great deal—political hash amongst the rest — but not very profitable, for whatever is done without name is nearly always done without money. 'Garibaldi,' however, brought me about £50.

"Don't bore yourself writing to me; but, if you like, let me write to you. I have plenty—too much—time on my hands, and it is about the last pleasure left me to commune with one who, though he has known me so long, still loves me.

"Charles is working hard away at his new trade, and likes it. His masters, the Messrs Sandell, have built a large foundry, and make all the materials of the rail."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Jan.* 23, 1854.

"I am fully aware how difficult—impossible I might say—it is to obtain any reply to any demand from M'Glashan, and am therefore not impatient on that score. Besides that, from his repeated remonstrances and complaints about 'Carew' lately, I am more than disenchanted to renew my connection with him.

"I hope soon again to be at work on something new for Chapman & Hall.

"John and Anne give me the only good news I ever heard of 'Sir Jasper'; but even were it worse than I like to believe, it can scarcely call for the criticisms M'G. forwards me. I really wrote it painstakingly and carefully, and, so far as in me lies, I try to do honestly with him.

"I have done nothing but feast and dance and other tomfooleries these last three weeks, for it is our Carnival; and to help me out of my slender exchequer, the Duke of Wellington has been here on a visit to us!"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Florence, *Oct.* 1854.

"Read the article I have written on Sardinia and Austria in the forthcoming number of the Magazine. It is a bold suggestion,—but it has met such high sanction already in Piedmont, and has appeared in a translation at Turin, whither I sent it. Lord J. Russell is here,—I have dined with him twice,—and he comes to me on Saturday.

He is very silent and reserved, but of course this is all essential to one whose chance expressions are eagerly caught at—happy if they be not misrepresented."

'Maurice Tiernay' and 'Sir Jasper Carew' were issued as volumes of the Parlour Library, nothing appearing on the title-pages to indicate that these two excellent works of fiction came from the pen of Charles Lever. The author's reason for preserving anonymity sprang from a fear—not unwarrantable—that the public might get the idea in its head that he was "over-writing." His red-wrappered monthly-part novels had now become a kind of institution in the book trade, and anything that would tend to depreciate the circulation of them was to be carefully avoided.

'The Dodd Family' had arrived at its serial end in April, and was published in book form; and Chapman & Hall had agreed to issue its successor, 'The Martins of Cro-Martin.' Lever was still endeavouring to make a bargain with 'The Dublin University' for a new serial. He was wavering about an American expedition, and Mr Chapman was all the while advocating a cheap reissue of his novels. These arrangements and projects afforded the novelist some mental relief, and he found himself able to attack his work with *verve*. In sending to M'Glashan the skeleton of a plot for his proposed Magazine serial, he described himself as labouring "with the zeal of an apostle and the sweat of a galley-slave." His fitful mind

was disturbed presently by a rumour which reached him in July. It was whispered that 'The Dublin University' would shortly be in the market. He wrote at once to Spencer asking this much-enduring man to institute inquiries. There was nothing he would not sacrifice in order to obtain possession of the periodical. If he had it in his hands again, he was confident that he would be able to retain it and to make a good property of it. But the rumour—arising possibly out of a suspicion that M'Glashan was breaking down—proved to be premature.

Lever had contemplated a visit to Ireland during the spring. Having decided to lay the scene of his next novel in Ireland, he was anxious for "atmosphere." Late in July he set out from Casa Capponi, and M'Glashan received one morning an invitation to meet him at his hotel in Dublin. The novelist found his admonisher in a low state of spirits, and he exerted himself to rouse him from his despondency. To a certain extent he must have succeeded, for a nephew of Lever, who dined with the pair at the Imperial Hotel in Dublin, declares that it was "a roar of fun from beginning to end." Lorrequer was in most brilliant form, and even the waiters might have been observed rushing from the dining-room endeavouring to stifle their laughter.

Lever spent the time gaily in Dublin—reviving old friendships and making new friends, listening to good stories and telling better ones. Amongst the old friends was M. J. Barry, who had been one

of the most valued contributors to 'The Dublin University.' He told Barry that Florence was the ideal place for the literary man; that he himself lived there for about £1200 a-year[1] in a style which could not be adopted in London on £3000 a-year, or in Ireland for any sum. He owned that his tastes and habits were extravagant: his mode of life, he explained, was not merely a case of luxurious inclinations, but one of necessity. "It feeds my lamp," he said, "which would die out otherwise. My receptions are my studies. I find there characters, and I pick up a thousand things that are to me invaluable. You can't keep drawing wine off the cask perpetually and putting nothing in it."

Amongst his entertainers in Dublin was the Viceregal Court. His *vis-à-vis* at a dinner at the Viceregal Lodge was Sir Bernard Burke, the Ulster King-at-Arms. The remainder of the company was interested merely in military affairs or Court functions. No one at the table seemed to care whether the Irish humourist spoke or was silent — no one there was interested in such a paltry entity as a mere man of intellect; so Lever, the life and soul of Florentine salons, pre-

[1] It is impossible to arrive at any definite conclusions concerning Lever's earnings from his writings. It is certain that during some years his annual income was not less than £2000. If the whole of the period from 'Harry Lorrequer' in 1837 to 'Lord Kilgobbin' in 1871 was taken into account, his estimate of £1200 a-year would not be very far astray. It is most likely an under-estimate. £50,000 would probably represent more accurately the sum of his literary earnings.—E. D.

served silence for most of the evening. When he did join in the conversation, he happened to venture an opinion that Sebastopol would not be taken for at least another year, and this resulted in his having to incur "as much ridicule as was consistent with viceregal politeness to bestow, and the small wit of small A.D.C.'s to inflict." So far as he was concerned, this dinner-party was a dismal affair: it recalled some equally dismal dinner-parties, or receptions, at the grand-ducal court of Baden.

Apparently Lever made no headway in Dublin with the matter of the Magazine, but his visit to Ireland refreshed and invigorated him. The sight of Irish faces and of Irish scenery and the sound of Irish voices dissipated some Florentine languorousness, and enabled him to set to work spiritedly at his new novel, 'The Martins.'

During the autumn of 1854 he submitted to M'Glashan a proposal for an interesting series of papers—"Stories of the Ruined Houses of Ireland." Nothing came of this. Towards the end of the year he contributed some further papers on Italian politics to 'The Dublin University.' One upon Sardinia and Austria created some attention in Italy, and a translation was published in Turin. English politics and foreign politics, viewed from the British standpoint, were affording him keen interest, and he had the privilege of discussing them under his own roof with a very distinguished personage, the Lord President of the Council, Lord John Russell.

Thoughts of entering Parliament were again crossing Lever's mind at this period; but his best friends, notably his brother John, sought to dissuade him from embarking upon a career which, for a man of his temperament, would be full of pitfalls, and would in all likelihood end in Nowhere.

XII.

FLORENCE AND SPEZZIA.

1855–1862.

The story of young Charles Lever — such of it as may be evolved from his father's letters and from other sources—is by no means uninteresting in itself, and it is intimately concerned, for a period, with the story of his father, who loved him dearly, and who looked forward to seeing the youth making a distinguished figure in the world. The profession of engineering did not hold him long. He was smitten with the military fever which had smitten his father before he had adopted medicine as a profession; but the novelist's son was trained in a school which differed widely from the school in which the novelist had been trained. Everything that could conduce to unsettle a high-spirited youth fell to the lot of young Charles Lever. Moreover, he could, and did, imbibe from his father's books a passion for military adventure. This in itself would have been nothing to cause uneasiness to a parent, but in addition to his longings for the adventurous career of a soldier, the

novelist's son had developed, at an early stage, a thorough contempt for "the simple life." The only son of a father to whom reckless generosity was an easy virtue, who looked upon thrift—or anything resembling it—merely as a subject for ridicule, it would have been wellnigh impossible for young Lever to have regarded money except as a commodity difficult at times to obtain, but imperative to spend as quickly and as lavishly as possible. Early in 1855 the young engineer decided to abandon his civil profession; and seeing that there was no use in trying to keep him out of the army, his father purchased a commission for him, and he was gazetted to a cornetcy in the Royal Wilts Regiment, then stationed at Corfu. "I own to you," Lever writes to Spencer, "I do not fancy the career, but he does not, and will not, settle down to anything else. We must only let him take his chance and try to be a Field Marshal, which in these times ought not to be so very difficult a matter, if one only thought of the competitorship."

Having had his attention drawn to military affairs, Lever now conceived a literary project in connection with them—a work to be entitled 'The Battlefields of Europe.' He submitted the idea to M'Glashan, but the publisher was in no condition to offer advice or to enter into speculations off the regular track.

A serious attack of gout in the stomach prostrated the novelist in June, and for weeks he was unable to sit at his desk. He describes himself as being

"covered with rugs and leeches, and warm-bathed to half his weight." He was so ill and so depressed that he felt he was going to die. When he was able to hold a pen he wrote to M'Glashan imploring him to send sixty pounds for his life insurance premiums. "I had almost hoped," he said, "that I was going to cheat the company and give them the slip." He had now concluded a bargain—a somewhat loose one—for the new serial for 'The Dublin University.' The novel was entitled 'The Fortunes of Glencore.' Soon after he had despatched the first instalment, he was disturbed by receiving a letter from Dublin which contained ill news of M'Glashan.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Florence, Casa Capponi, *July* 5, 1855.

"This is to thank you for so promptly answering Chapman. The delay was not *his* fault, but mine,—at least, so far as anything can be culpable which a man cannot help. Two feet of water would suffice to drown a baby; and though it takes a quarter of a million to smash Strahan & Paul, a very few hundreds would do all that mischief to Charles Lever.

"I have just made arrangements for a story to be contributed to 'The Dublin University Magazine,' but at the same instant I have received the most alarming tidings of M'Glashan's health. I am, in fact, informed—and on such authority as I must believe—that disease of the brain has dis-

played itself, and aberration already become apparent. Total loss of memory I could collect from his letters to myself,—they were latterly nothing but a repetition of the same queries, and occasionally almost incoherent.

"It is a great pity, for, without being an original mind or one of high order, it was the rarest intellect I ever met for the gift of identifying others, looking out for the right man, and making him do the thing he was capable of. He overworked to a dreadful extent, and then, by gradual cultivation, he had so elevated his faculties above those of his associates, that he left himself companionless. Hence all the mischief.

"I hope—but I scarcely have courage to assure myself—that you like 'Cro-Martin.' At the same time, I think its more reflective characters will please you, and I own I wrote it with due thought.

"It is just possible that events might bring the Magazine into the market. If so, there is nothing I'd make such an effort to obtain. It would be in my hands a property—a great one.

"Charley is dallying at Corfu, and anxiously hoping to see the Crimea. I tell him not to hurry: he'll be in good time for the taking of Sebastopol —in '56 or '57."

Early in September Lever received a pitiful letter from M'Glashan: "I am utterly ruined in health and fortune; they have given me a pittance to live on, but taken away the Magazine and all

that I care to live for. You have always treated me generously and never made hard bargains with me. Now I hope you will look to yourself, and not give 'Glencore' away without being well and handsomely paid."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"SPEZZIA, *Sept.* 1855.

"My contract for 'Tiernay' and 'Carew' was £20 a sheet, the copyright remaining mine, and my name not to be disclosed as author. These were terms conceded to M'Glashan out of personal regard to himself. So disadvantageous were they to me, that when pressing me to contribute my present tale of 'Glencore' M'Glashan said, 'Make the arrangement as will suit and fairly reimburse you, and do in all respects what you think right between us.' In this way, and without any more definite understanding, I began, nor have we to this hour any real contract between us.

"I want you to see Mr Wardlaw, and (amongst other inquiries) demand £2 per page — £32 per sheet — for 'Glencore,' copyright to be preserved to me.

"In your conversation with Wardlaw could you ascertain whether the present proprietors, whoever they are, might be disposed to treat with me for the editorship? You might suggest that such an arrangement would be very likely to meet liberal acceptance at my hands. The state of the Magazine when before under my management might be referred to for evidence of its success."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Spezzia, *Sept.* 12, 1855.

"The deaths in Tuscany [from cholera] are reported at 700 a-day. I am not myself afraid of the disease, but I am more than usually anxious about my children.

"As to M'Glashan: the last letter said the Magazine had been reserved to him by some arrangement, and would, he hoped, yield him wherewithal to live on; but my impression is that the creditors have only done this in the prospect that his days are numbered, and not wishing to do anything like severity to a man so painfully placed. . . . Wardlaw, who encloses the proofs, says, 'M'Glashan grows more and more helpless.' I believe his malady is softening of the brain—and if so, incurable."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Spezzia, *Sept.* 17, 1855.

"If I could obtain the Magazine for myself it would be a great object. I'm sure Chapman would assist in the purchase, or take some share in it.

"My fear is that J. F. Waller, at present acting as editor, will step into it before any one can interfere, and the assignees may not know that I would willingly resume it—either as editor or owner."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Spezzia, *Sept.* 27, 1855.

"A letter written by M'Glashan and merely addressed 'Charles Lever' was posted in Dublin

on the 15th of August last, and by some accident was included in the American mail, and arrived duly in New York on September 1st, when by an equally strange accident it was re-directed there, and addressed 'Spezzia,' and to-day it came to my house here.

"How M'Glashan forgot to append my address is easy enough to see. How any one in New York knew it, and re-directed the letter, is more difficult to explain.

"If my demand [for 'Glencore'] be thought too high, I have no alternative save leaving 'Glencore' as a 'payment' to the Magazine, reserving to myself its completion elsewhere. Wardlaw must be distinctly given to understand that I never contributed this story even to M'Glashan on my previous terms, still less would I do so to those with whom I have no ties of personal intimacy or friendship. You can, I know, learn much from Mr Wardlaw, whom I have ever found a straightforward honest man, — cold as a Scotchman, but to be depended on."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Florence, *Oct.* 16, 1855.

[Lever instructs his correspondent to request that his MS. for the November portion be at once returned, and Mr W. be informed that Mr L. will now consider himself free to make arrangements for the continuance of the story of 'Glencore' in any magazine or in any quarter that may suit him.]

"I almost fancy I can read the whole web

of this small intrigue, and detect the hand of J. F. Waller throughout it.

"The trustees might, by a reference to the Magazine account, have seen that while I myself edited the Magazine I paid for a story extending through 18 Nos., and to a nameless author who had never written fiction before, £20 a sheet."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Capponi, *Nov.* 7, 1855.

"The opening of 'Glencore' having already appeared in the Magazine, will, I now find, seriously damage its continuance elsewhere, since no periodical will republish the past chapters, nor can they take up a story thus interrupted, and when commencement must be sought for elsewhere. . . . Now Mr Wardlaw knows, and the books will prove, that my terms with M'Glashan were £20 per sheet. By a dodge in a mere laughing conversation at breakfast he made a sheet to mean sixteen or seventeen pages, and as I never haggled about anything, he actually took advantage of my easiness, and paid me £20 per seventeen pages. . . . In a pure matter of business I have no right to dwell upon the want of consideration towards an old friend and supporter of the Magazine like myself, but I do feel deeply the scant courtesy with which I have been treated, and the little regard paid either to my interests or my sentiments as an author."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"FLORENCE, *Dec.* 5, 1855.

"I thank you most heartily for keeping me *au courant* to the destinies of the Magazine. I have just learned that H[urst] & B[lackett] have become the proprietors, with the intention of publishing in future in England, as I see 'The Dublin Evening Mail' has already announced. H. & B. are also, as I am informed, about to write to me,—probably about 'Glencore,' but not impossibly about editorship. Many of the difficulties and 'disagreeables' which my friends anticipate for me as editor of the Magazine would be probably obviated by publishing in England. Indeed from that moment the journal would cease to be Irish—at least, in all the acrimonious attributes of that unhappy adjective; and if H. & B. would propose such terms as I could accept, I'd accede, if only as a valid and sufficient reason to draw nearer to England, wherefrom I have, for my own and my children's interests, too long separated myself. I also think that with capital, and London publishing to back it, the Magazine might be raised into a very worthy rivalry with 'Blackwood's,' its one solitary competitor. However, I am merely speculating on all this, and rather weaving a web of hopes and wishes than of solid reason and sound expectation.

"It would be well if the Dublin people (in 50 Sackville St.) could be brought to book for the part 'Glencores' at once. There are also a few pp. about politics in the August No., written

at M'Glashan's request. They cost me more work than double as much fiction.

"I hope you continue to like 'Cro-Martin.' They say in England it is the best I've done,—but I scarcely hope it myself."

The year 1855 closed, with plenty of work to do and plenty of interest in the work, with the usual shortage of supplies, with hopes and fears and projects chasing each other through the brain which had coined them.

'The Martins' was rapidly advancing towards its close. The serial course of 'Glencore' had been interrupted by the difficulties which had beset the Magazine, and these difficulties were not surmounted until the spring of 1856, when Lever made a journey to London and entered into an arrangement with Hurst & Blackett to continue the story, payment to be at the rate of £20 per sheet. In London he heard that his brother was seriously ill. He intended to cross over to Ireland, but John Lever's doctors warned him that he must not visit his brother, as his only chance of recovery depended upon perfect rest; so the novelist returned, gloomily, to Italy. By this time 'The Martins' had been published in volume form. He was more sensitive than usual about criticisms of this book, and the opinion of a London literary weekly that "Mr Lever had committed his one dull novel" caused him intense chagrin. His own opinion was that the more reflective characters would please his friends; and Mary Martin was

one of his best-loved heroines—therefore his friends should admire her.

He was able now to devote his attention exclusively to 'Glencore,' and all would have been well with him, only that he was very much disturbed about his son. The young soldier had been sowing a considerable crop of wild oats.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Nov.* 21, 1856.

"I have just learnt that Charley is idling about in Dublin, his regiment having been disbanded, and he himself, having passed some bills and contracted other debts, being probably unwilling to face us here at home. I say probably, because he has not written to any of us, and it is only through Maxwell having met him that I know of his being in Dublin.

"Passing over the distress and disappointment that this has occasioned me, I address myself at once to the question—What is to be done with him? Now, as he must earn his bread in some fashion, and as he has himself closed the [? gates] against him by his misconduct, I want to ascertain if he is disposed to work at any career, and what? If medicine, I can, through my Dublin professional connection, have him apprenticed, and will do my best to support him — not in extravagance and debauchery, but suitably and becomingly—as long as I am able.

"To broach this myself directly to him would be to weaken any influence his past misconduct

should exert over him, so that the suggestion, to be effectual, ought to come from another,—none so fit as you, whose attachment to me he well knows. Now if you would sound him, and say that if he were really disposed to make amends for all he has done and steadily to devote himself to study and application, you would at once acquaint me with this resolve and endeavour to effect an arrangement to carry it out. We could thus at least approximate the knowledge of whether he desires to be of use to himself, and in what capacity. Had he come straight back here at once I should have set him down to read with a tutor, but as this has not happened, and as I see great disadvantages in his coming to a place like this with such habits as he has now acquired, I deem the best thing will be to try if he can be settled down to learn in Dublin either the rudiments of a career or to prepare himself for a merchant's office.

"If he has not called on you ere this, he will of course be heard of through Miss Baker or Mr Saunders of Mount Street; but I trust that you have already seen him. If you find that he rejects the overtures as to a profession, and will not give such pledges as may lead us to hope for amendment, you must give him £20 to come home at once (there is something now due to me from the Magazine). At the same time, it is essential that he should come at once home, and not remain to spend the money at hotels.

"But the chances are that he may prefer to

embrace a career, and I have only to hope that he may be taught by past experience that a life of debt and dissipation cannot lead to credit or honour. His present liabilities have thrown me into great, almost too great, embarrassment. How I am to pay them and support myself and my family is a problem that will depend upon my gaining back a little of that tranquillity of head without which no man can work. I will, however, do my best and hope for the best.

"Of course you must not suffer it to escape you that this idea of a profession originates with me. It must be, as it were, *your* suggestion; and while you promise to write and consult me upon it, you could recommend him to go down and stay at Ardnucker, where I am sure they would kindly have him until I write you again.

"I hope I have already expressed all I mean, but my head is sorely troubled while I write."

Young Lever did not relish the idea of visiting a father whose purse and whose patience he had taxed so severely. He preferred to retire upon his uncle at Ardnucker, and later to quarter himself upon the Rev. Mortimer O'Sullivan at Tanderagee.

'The Fortunes of Glencore' was out of hand early in 1857. It was published in three volumes by Chapman & Hall — the first work (bearing the author's name on the title-page) by Lever which was issued in three-volume form. Of 'Glencore' he says: "I am unwilling to suffer this tale to

leave my hands without a word of explanation. . . . If I have always had before me the fact that to movement and action, to the stir of incident, and to a certain light-heartedness and gaiety of temperament (more easy to impart to others than to repress in one's self), I have owned much, if not all, of whatever popularity I enjoyed, I have felt (or fancied I felt) that it would be in the delineation of very different scenes, and in the portraiture of very different emotions, that I should reap what I would reckon as a real success. This conviction—or impression, if you will—has become stronger with years and with fuller knowledge of life; and time has confirmed me in the notion that any skill I possess lies in the detection of character and in the unravelment of that tangled skein which makes up human motives." Opportunities of beholding the game played by Society (he further declares), as well as his inclination to study the game, helped him to give a picture of the manners, and to describe the modes and moods, of the age he lived in. If he had often grinned because of the narrow fortune which had prevented him from "cutting in," he was able to console himself with the thought that he might have risen from the table a loser. He goes on to say that though the incidents which are noticeable in the world of the well-bred are fewer, because the friction is less than in classes where vicissitudes of fortune are more frequent, yet the play of passion, though shadowed by polished conventionalities, is often more highly developed.

To trace and to mark these developments was, he assures us, one of the great pleasures of his life. "Certain details, certain characteristics, I have of course borrowed—as he who would mould a human face must needs have copied an eye, a nose, a chin from some existent model,—but beyond this I have not gone; nor indeed have I ever found, in all my experiences of life, that fiction ever suggests what has not been implanted unconsciously by memory—originality in the delineation of character being little more than a new combination of old materials derived from that source."

'Glencore' being disposed of, its author planned out a new tale, going again to Ireland for his scenery and his characters. He took for his hero, or leading villain, John Sadlier,[1] the once famous banker and politician, who put an end to his own career in 1856 by committing suicide on Hampstead Heath. Lever did not attempt to keep closely to the true story of Sadlier, or to depict the man as he had lived and moved: he merely used incidents in his career and traits in his character, and as he warmed to his work Davenport Dunn bore but a slight resemblance to John Sadlier. By this time the novelist had all but abandoned the portrayal of comic personages,—'Glencore' harboured Billy Traynor, but Billy was only a faint echo of Mickey Free or Darby the Blast,—and 'Davenport Dunn,' though it was full of spirit,

[1] It is said that Sadlier was one of the models for Dickens's Mr Merdle.—E. D.

bristled with character sketches, and was packed with adventure, was on the whole a much graver and possibly a stronger performance than anything which had preceded it. The story appeared in the monthly part form, Phiz's illustrations embellishing it.

Lever paid another visit to London in the spring of 1857 : it was chiefly a business visit. He wished to discuss his forthcoming novel with Chapman & Hall and with Phiz. While he was in London he received some disturbing news of his son (who was still idling in Ireland), and he was half inclined to cross the Irish Sea, but he found he had lingered too long in London—a city in which he always managed to accomplish more card-playing than was good for his health or his pocket, — so he hurried back to Florence and 'Davenport Dunn.' Although there is no evidence to bear out the conjecture, it is most likely that he endeavoured during this visit to England to further his cause as a prospective diplomatist. On the whole, 1857 was a comparatively uneventful year.

Again—early in 1858—did the pressure of his financial affairs stir him to the exertion of "working double tides," and, looking around him for a subject, it occurred to him that a highly romantic tale could be woven out of the adventures of a supposititious son and heir of Charles Edward Stuart, the offspring of a secret marriage with a daughter of the Geraldines. He found a sufficiently plausible groundwork for the theory of

this marriage and its consequences in the letters of Sir Horace Mann.[1]

Poor M'Glashan died in 1858, and 'The Dublin University' passed into the hands of Mr Digby Starkey and Mr Cheyne Brady. They proposed to Lever that he should renew his relations with the Magazine, and he arranged with them to contribute to it the adventures of 'Gerald Fitzgerald the Chevalier.'

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *July* 4, 1858.

"After repeated promises of place from the present Government, I am put off with an offer so small and contemptible that I answered it by indignant refusal.

"The Yankees have come to something like—but not exactly—a definite offer. If it be put in a real, tangible, and unevasive way I shall accept, pitching my friends the Tories to the winds.

"Have you read 'D. D.' and 'Fitzgerald'? If so, what do you say to them?"

[1] He quotes Sir Horace as his authority for the pitiful tragedy which concludes the adventures of his 'Chevalier': "Any anxiety we might ever have felt on the score of a certain individual alleged to have been the legitimately born son of Charles Edward is now over. He was murdered last week. . . . Many doubted that there was any, even the slightest, claim on his part to Stuart blood, but Mr Pitt was not of this number. He had taken the greatest pains to obtain information on the subject, and had, I am told, in his possession copies of all the documents which substantiated the youth's rights."—E. D.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Spezzia, *Aug.* 10, 1858.

"I cannot tell you how gratified I was by what you say of 'Cro-Martin.' Independently of all a man's natural misgivings about his own failing powers, it is unspeakably encouraging to be judged favourably by one's oldest and best of friends, whose true-heartedness would not suffer him to flatter or say more than he felt. I know —I feel—that my old vein is worked out. I am as much aware of it as I am of scanty hair and the fifty other signs of age about me, but I don't despair of finding other shafts to work, and of making my knowledge of life and mankind available,—even though I have lost the power to make my books droll or laughable.

"We have come down here for the bathing to the most beautiful spot on the Mediterranean, and are boating and swimming to our heart's content, — everything but working, which really I cannot do in this most fascinating of all idling localities."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Nov.* 1, 1858.

"Yesterday I had a civil note from Lord Malmesbury stating that the regulation for consular appointments required that no candidate should be above fifty, and all should submit to a rigid examination. He saw no better means of introducing me into 'the line' than by creating for me a vice-consulate at a place I am much attached to

—Spezzia. The rule as to age and examination did not apply to vice-consular appointments nor to their promotion, so that once a V.-C. I can be advanced, if opportunity serve, to something worth having. Spezzia will not be £300 a-year; but as I like the place, and there is nothing—actually nothing—to do, I have thought it best to accept it. In fact, to refuse would be to exclude myself totally from all hope of F. O. patronage, and this I did not deem wise to do. The whole negotiation is yet secret, and until I am gazetted I wish it to remain so. The consulship at Naples is what I look to, and what, if negotiations should open to a renewal of relations there, I might hope to obtain.

"I hope you like 'D. Dunn.' I have hardly courage to say the same for 'Fitzgerald,' though some say it is better than the other.

"I have been solicited to give Readings *à la* Dickens; but though pecuniarily a temptation, there is much I dislike in the exhibition. . . .

"I ought to add that Sir J. Hudson, the Ambassador at Turin, strongly advised my acceptance of Spezzia, offered as it was."

No sooner had he made up his mind to accept the Spezzia post than he was intently gazing at the Naples consulship, which he hoped would drop like a ripe plum into his mouth when he could muster up courage to take a step forward.

Another turn of Fortune's wheel which cheered him in 1858 was the appointment of his son to the

2nd Dragoon Guards. The regiment was under the command of General Seymour, and was stationed in India.

In the spring of 1859 'Davenport Dunn' had run its monthly course, and it was published in book form. The author's official duties were extremely light, and did not tie him to Spezzia. He was able to visit his vice-consulate when it pleased him, and to indulge in his favourite pastimes of boating and bathing all through the summer months.

Young Lieutenant Lever was now winning some golden opinions in India, though there was a little dross to be found in the gold. One of his brother officers describes him as being "an exact facsimile of Charles O'Malley. He was the most accomplished young man I have ever heard of or read of," says this witness, "not only in such gifts as would make him conspicuous in a regiment, but he was likewise an accomplished linguist, and possessed a vast knowledge of general literature." "He was a warm-hearted, generous fellow," declares another of his brother officers. "But," he continues regretfully, "he was given too much to convivial and extravagant habits. Apparently he had set before himself, as an ideal of what a cavalry soldier should be, the bygone type of Jack Hinton." By no means a bad type, one might add, if only the crack cavalry officer had sufficient means to live up to the ideal.

'Gerald Fitzgerald' came to the end of its irregular magazine course in 1859. For some reason which is not disclosed in Lever's correspondence,

this novel was not published in book form in this country during the author's lifetime.[1] Amongst other graphic character-sketches, 'Fitzgerald' furnishes vivid studies of Alfieri and of Mirabeau. His next novel, 'One of Them,' was put in hand during the autumn: it was written wholly in the Villa Marola at Spezzia. It is said that the story was largely autobiographical. It gives an intimate description of life in an Ulster dispensary, and when the scene is shifted from Ireland the reader is taken to Florence. The most outstanding character in this book is the acute, good-humoured "Yankee," Quackinboss.

While 'One of Them' was moving leisurely onwards in its monthly groove, Charles Dickens asked Lever for a serial for 'All the Year Round.' Once more did the Irish novelist adopt the dual system; while he was still in the throes of 'One of Them' he commenced to write 'A Day's Ride: A Life's Romance.' This story relates the adventures of a half-shrewd, half-foolish day-dreamer. Through it there runs a curious vein of irony which is quite different from the author's early or later quality of humour. There is an insufficiency of movement in the tale; and it proved to be quite unsuited for serial publication in a magazine where the plot interest has to be kept alive from month to month. Dickens was bitterly disappointed: he complained

[1] A "pirated" edition of it appeared in America during Lever's lifetime. Its first issue in book form in this country was in 1897, when Downey & Co. published it (by arrangement with the author's grandson) in one volume.—E. D.

that the circulation of his magazine was injuriously affected. Something perilously near a quarrel arose between the editor of 'All the Year Round' and the author of 'A Day's Ride.' Lever did not hold a very high opinion of the novel, but he was justified in not regarding it as an absolutely worthless performance.

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Spezzia, *Sept.* 7, 1859.

"It was only because I found myself in a maze of troubles at the moment of what is ordinarily a pleasant family event that I had not a moment to write to you. Chapman & Hall, in whom for years back all my confidence has been unbounded, have behaved to me in a way to make me uneasy as to my right in my works, and I feel the very gravest anxiety for the future. This case yet hangs over me, and how it is to [? terminate] I cannot foresee. This is but a sorry [excuse] for suffering you to incur all the inconvenience I have occasioned; but when have I ceased to be a burthen to you?

"I wrote by this post to Chapman to forward the money for the insurance, and will immediately see to the other. Brady cannot affect any difficulty in settling with you: his only payment to myself personally was £100, somewhere in the present year. Therefore the number of sheets of my contributions, multiplied by the sum per sheet (£30 or £35, I forget which), will give the exact amount due.

"I am about to begin a new serial, which will at least provide for the present.

"The 'Party,' after [? immense] pledges and compliments, went out without giving me anything beyond this very humble sinecure; but sinecure it is, and therefore for once 'The right man in the right place.'

"Charley was well, and fighting up in Oude, when last I heard from him; but all the pleasure of killing sepoys does not, it would appear, so entirely engross him that he cannot spend money, and he draws a bill with the same nonchalance that he draws his sword. Pussy's husband is a Captain Bowes-Watson,—only twenty-two years of age, but a Crimean and Indian hero. He is of the veritable English type—blond, stiff, silent, and upstanding, and what Colonel Haggerstone would call 'a perfect gentleman,' being utterly incapable by any effort of his own to provide for his own support. They are for the present poorly off, but at the death of a very old grandmother will have a fair competence,—about £1500 a-year. I am sorely sorry to part with her, but the *malheur* is that we lose in age the solace of those whose society we always hoped to console us. We go through the years of training and teaching and educating to give them up when they have grown companionable. Very selfish regrets these, but they are my latest wounds, and they smart the most.

"Julia is 'contracted,' but the event is, and must be, somewhat distant. In other respects it is what is called a great match. And so only

Baby (as Sydney is called) remains, — a marvellously clever little damsel of ten, whose humour and wit exceed that of all the grown folk I know.

"I hope to send you the first number of my new serial by the end of next month. Its title is 'One of Them.'"

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Spezzia, *Sept.* 17, 1860.

"I am doing my best at 'One of Them.' 'The Ride' I write as carelessly as a common letter, but I'd not be the least astonished to find the success in the inverse ratio to the trouble. At all events, I am hard worked just now, and as ill-luck would have it, it is just the moment the F. O. should call upon me for details about Italy.

"The position of Sardinia is now one of immense difficulty. If she throws herself on France she must confront the [? Revolutionary] party at home, who are ready to seize upon Garibaldi and place him at the head of the movement. If she adopts Garibaldi and his plans, she offends France, and may be left to meet Austria alone and unaided. The old story—the beast that can't live on sand and dies in the water. To be sure, our own newspapers assure her complacently that she has the 'moral aid' of England. But moral aid in these days of steel-plated frigates and Armstrong guns is rather out of date, not to say that at the best it is very like looking at a man drowning and assuring him all the while how sorry you are that

he had not learned to swim when he was young. The crisis is most interesting, particularly so to me, as I know all the actors—Admirals, Generals, and Ministers—who are figuring *en scène*.

"One would have thought the withdrawal of the French Ambassador from Turin would have caused great discomfiture here, but with a native craft—not always right—the Italians think it a mere dodge, and that the Emperor's policy is: 'Go on. I'm not looking at you!'"

Small as the salary was, and insignificant as the position seemed to be, his vice-consulship was of considerable service to Lever: it gave him work to do when he was weary of weaving the web of fiction, and it prevented him from indulging too recklessly in the pleasures of Florentine society. The pity of it was that the office came to him so late, and that, when "the Party" thought fit to recognise his services, they should have recognised them so trivially. It must be borne in mind that Lever was no longer young: he was in his fifty-third year when the Spezzian post was offered to him; and his manner of living had been of such a free-and-easy character that anything in the shape of control chafed him, especially when the controller was a jack-in-office.

In 1861 a good deal of time was spent in endeavouring to make a bargain with Chapman & Hall for the publication, in book form, of 'A Day's Ride,' and to induce that firm to enter into an arrangement for the serial publication of a new

novel, 'The Barringtons.' 'The Dublin University' being practically closed as a paying vehicle for serial stories, Lever sought to find a publishing firm which might take the place of M'Glashan. He regarded 'Blackwood's Magazine' as the first of all periodical publications, but he feared that the Editor could not easily be induced to open his pages to the author of 'Harry Lorrequer.' However, he was fired with the desire to become a contributor to 'Maga,' and he enlisted the good offices of Lord Lytton. His brother novelist put the matter before Mr John Blackwood, who wrote, in May 1861, this kindly letter: "Admiring your genius cordially, as I do, I feel so doubtful as to whether what you would write would be suitable for the Magazine that I am unwilling to make a proposition, or to invite you to send MS. It would go sorely against my grain to decline anything from the friend of my youth, Harry Lorrequer." This — though the reference to his first book afforded him a momentary flush of pleasure—was just the kind of letter which would cause much heart-burning. All his efforts to weed and to prune resulted only in Blackwood's refusal to accept a posey from his garden! He wrote to Spencer in a melancholy tone; he was "out of health, out of work, out of spirits." In addition to his literary troubles, the condition of his wife's health had been the cause of much anxiety. He now feared that she was likely to become a confirmed invalid. Late in July his report to Spencer was that Mrs Lever was very ill, and that his

money troubles were more acute than ever. His son was making no effort to lighten the burden: he was still in India, and was still drawing recklessly upon his father. Altogether, Lever's heart was heavy during the greater part of 1861. Late in the year he made a vigorous effort to pull himself together, and to try to forget his troubles by sticking closely to his desk. He made good progress with 'The Barringtons,' and the first monthly part appeared in February 1862.

A visitor to the Levers in the summer of 1862 describes the novelist as being "all animation." But Mrs Lever was an invalid, and could not move from her sofa. Though Lever had grown very corpulent, he had lost none of his cunning as a swimmer or as an oarsman. He spent a considerable portion of each day in the water, swimming with his daughters; and at night, "when the land breeze came through the orange-groves," he would row himself and his daughters in their boat on the bay. On one occasion the head of the family and his eldest daughter had a very narrow escape from drowning. They were boating, and in endeavouring to rescue her dog, who seemed to be in difficulties, Miss Lever capsized the boat. Father and daughter kept themselves afloat partly with the aid of an oar,—they were a full mile from the shore when the accident happened. A younger daughter of the novelist witnessed from a window in the house the capsizing of the skiff. Without alarming her mother by informing her of the accident, she left the

house and got a boat sent out to the assistance of the swimmers, who were brought ashore little the worse for a long immersion. This incident furnished the press with reports of Lever's death, —"grossly exaggerated," as Mark Twain would put it,—and when 'The Barringtons' was about to be published in book form, the author wrote to one of his journalistic friends saying that he believed the story was not bad, — at least, not worse than most stories of his which had found favour with the public. "As my critics," he went on, "were wont to blackguard me for over-writing, let me have the (supposed) advantage to be derived from its being a full twelvemonth since the world has heard of me — except as having died at Spezzia."

He finished the year well. He was anxious to show that his tiff with the editor of 'All the Year Round' was forgotten. The dedication prefixed to 'The Barringtons,' dated "26th December 1862," is couched in these terms:—

"My dear Dickens, — Among the thousands who read and re-read your writings, you have not one who more warmly admires your genius than myself; and to say this in confidence to the world, I dedicate to you this story."

XIII.

FLORENCE AND SPEZZIA.

1863.

It seemed as if 1863 was about to prove a more enlivening year for Charles Lever than some of its predecessors had been. 'Barrington' was being applauded by his friends. Amongst these was Mr John Blackwood, for whose good opinion Lever sent his thanks in a letter dated January 30. To Lord Malmesbury he forwarded a copy of the novel, with the following letter :—

To The Earl of Malmesbury.

"Hôtel d'Odessa, Spezzia, *Feb.* 16, 1863.

"My dear Lord,—I am sincerely obliged by your lordship's note in acknowledgment of 'Barrington.'

"I am sure you are right in your estimate of Kinglake's book.[1] Such diatribes are no more

[1] The allusion is to the alleged personal cowardice of the third Napoleon. "No man," declares Lord Malmesbury, "could be less exposed to such an accusation. I saw him jump off the bridge over the Rhine at Geneva when a youth ; and all men can feel what must have been his agonies when riding all day at the Battle of Sedan with his deadly malady upon him."—E. D.

history than the Balaclava charge was war. . . . It was, however, his brief to make out the Crimean war a French intrigue, and he obeyed the old legal maxim in a different case—'Abuse the plaintiff's attorney.'

"Italy is something farther from union than a year ago. In dealing with the brigandage, Piedmont has contrived to insult the prejudices of the South by wholesale invectives against all things Neapolitan. French intrigues unquestionably help to keep up the uncertainty which all Italians feel as to the future, and the inadequacy of the men in power here contributes to the same. Indeed, what Kinglake says of the English Generals—questioning how the great Duke would have dealt with the matter before them—might be applied to Italian statesmen as regards Cavour. They have not a shadow of a policy, save in their guesses as to how *he* would have treated any question before them. To get 'steerage-way' on the nation, Cavour had to launch her into a revolution; but if these people try the same experiment they are likely to be shipwrecked.

"It would be both a pride and a pleasure to me to send your lordship tidings occasionally of events here, if you cared for it."

After some half a dozen letters had passed between Lever and John Blackwood concerning Magazine papers, Lever took courage and again asked the question which he had asked in 1861. This time his way of putting it was: "I have a

half-novel, half-romance, of an Irish Garibaldian in my head—only the opening chapters written. What would you say to it?" To this Blackwood replied: "It is a serious business to start a long serial, and I would not like to decide without seeing the bulk of the work. I do not know how you have been in the habit of writing, whether from month to month, or getting a good way ahead before publication is commenced. If the latter is your usual plan, I have no hesitation in asking you to send me a good mass of the MS., and I will let you know as speedily as possible what I think and can propose."

From this point onward—from 1863 to 1872[1]—the story of Charles Lever's literary life is told mainly in his letters to the House of Blackwood: the current of his correspondence, which at one time had streamed into Ireland, was now diverted, and Lever ingenuously revealed himself and his methods of work and play to Mr John Blackwood.

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Hôtel d'Odessa, Spezzia, *May* 2, 1863.

"I hasten to answer and thank you for your letter. I am glad you like the line I have taken on Italy. I believe it to be the true one, and I know that it is, so far, new.

[1] In Dr Fitzpatrick's biography only a scant account of the novelist's life during this period is furnished; but a number of Lever's letters to Mr John Blackwood are given in Mrs Blackwood Porter's Life of her father. I am indebted to Mrs Porter for permission to include some of these with the others, and also several letters from Mr John Blackwood to Lever.

"As to my story, I'd give you my whole plan in detail at once but for this reason, which you will acknowledge to be good — that the very moment I revealed it I should be obliged to invent another! To such an extent do I labour under this unfortunate disability, that in my own family no one ever questions me as to the issue of any tale I am engaged on, well knowing that once I have discussed, I should be obliged to change it.

"You ask me how I write. My reply is, just as I live—from hand to mouth! I can do nothing continuously—that is, without seeing the printed part close behind me. This has been my practice for five-and-twenty years, and I don't think I could change it. At least, I would deem it a rash experiment to try."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Hôtel d'Odessa, Spezzia, *May* 8, 1863.

"You will have had my note about my story, and all that I have to say on that score is already said. Only that I have not written any more, nor can I, without either a proof in print or a look at my MS.; for, as I had to own to you, most ignominiously, I have only one way of writing! And like the gentleman mentioned by Locke, who, having learned to dance in a room where there was an old hairbrush, never could accomplish a step without that accompaniment, so I must stick to my poor traditions, of which an old coat and an old ink-bottle, and a craving impatience to see how my characters look in type, are chief; and I

seriously believe, if you cut me off from these—there's an end of me!

"I think there is material for a pleasant half-gossiping sort of paper on social Italy—'Life in Italian Cities,'—those strange wildernesses where rare plants and weeds live together on a pleasant equality, and where you may find the cowslip under a glass and the cactus on a dunghill. Is it not strange, there is nothing so graphic about Italy as the sketches in Byron's letters? Perhaps it was the very blending of Dirt and Deity in himself led him into the exact appreciation.

"My hand o' write is none of the clearest, but I'll do my best to be legible *to* you and *by* you; and with my hearty thanks for your very cordial note."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Hôtel d'Odessa, Spezzia, *May* 16, 1863.

"Thanks for your note and its enclosure, which reached me this morning.

"I am glad you have understood what, after I had sent it off, appeared to me a very unintelligible note, being in fact an attempt to explain what even to myself is not explicable—the [only] mode in which I can write a story.

"You are perfectly right as to looking at the thing in proof: it is the same test as the artists' one of seeing their drawing in a looking-glass,—all that is good is confirmed, and all that is out of drawing or wrong in perspective is just as sure of being displayed strongly.

"If your opinion be favourable, the point which

will most interest me to know is the time of publishing; for, seeing that I want some material which I can only obtain by personal intercourse, the longer the interval, moderately speaking, the better for me.

"Secondly. Should we travel this road together, I want to beg that you will be as free to tell me what you think of what I send as though I was the rawest recruit in literature. I never write with the same spirit as under such criticism—given when not too late to amend; and if anything reaches you that you think ill of, do not hesitate to say so at once. I can change—in fact, it is the one compensation for all the inartistic demerits of my way of work—I can change as easily as I can talk of changing. These are all that I want to stipulate for on my part; the rest is with you. I am so eager to get on, that when you send me a proof (I cannot till then) I'll have at it at once. Meanwhile I lie in the sun and suck oranges."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Hôtel d'Odessa, Spezzia, *May* 28, 1863.

"Though I have been, not without some anxiety, waiting for a proof of my story, or some tidings of it,—for I cannot go on without a clue,—I now write to send you a paper on 'Why Italy has not Done More,' knowing from my own experiences the benefit of being early in Mag. 'make up.'

"I hope much you will like it. If you think that any addition to it would be necessary, or in fact, if you have any changes to suggest, pray let me know."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Hôtel d'Odessa, Spezzia, *June* 25, 1863.

"I have just received your pleasant note and its enclosure. How your promptitude tells of a long intimacy with Grub Street!

"As to quantity, 18 sheets of the D. U. M. used to suffice for a 3-vol. novel; but it shall be more—20 if you like. I always feel with the hostess in 'The Honeymoon.' When reproached for her liquor, she excused herself by saying that as she knew it was bad, she gave short measure.

"One *contretemps* or another has knocked me out of work latterly; but when the proof reaches me I'll get into harness and pull away.

"Is it amongst the possible things to see you ever—this side o' the Alps? It would be a great pleasure to me to hear it was, not to say the *positive advantage* of having a gossip with you.

"The Mag. arrives most regularly and is a great pleasure to me. There is (to me) a memory of school-days in the grim old face on the cover, that brings back more flitting thoughts of long ago than I believed could have been evoked by anything."

To Mr John Blackwood.

[Undated.]

"First of all, I thank you for your kind note, and say with what real pride I shall see myself in your columns. 'Ebony' has been an ambition of mine since my boyhood. I send you all that I know about Italy in an article I have boiled down from

an ox to a basin of broth, and only hope it may suit your palate. I send you the opening of the Garibaldi romance. To give all the realism so necessary for a story of adventure, I was obliged to set out very quietly. Let me have your opinion as soon as conveniently you can. I quite agree with you about the mystery as to the authorship, and will answer for my part. Don't forget to send me 'Maga' when out."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Spezzia, *June* 26, 1863.

"It has happened to me more than once, when particularly anxious to do well, to make a fiasco of it. I have the same anxiety now; and to put me at my ease, if there be anything you like in these, say so, for, like most of my countrymen, I thrive better on kindnesses than on kicks."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Spezzia, *July* 26, 1863.

"I send by this post one sheet and half—or nearly — of 'Tony' corrected for the Nov. No., being, I suspect, as much as your readers would swallow at a time. Let chap. ix. end where I have marked, and I'll try, if I can, to put in the missing link, which, as you observe, occurs at that place.

"Of course M'Casky 'is extravagant,' but I'll swear to you not more so than scores of real flesh-and-blood men in the land he came from.

"My home critics say that all that political part at Naples is dull and heavy. I don't think it so; besides, I have endeavoured to assure them that there is in novel-writing a principle, analogous to what chemists find in active medicinal substances, and which they profanely called 'inert matter,' but which, if our knowledge were greater, would doubtless display some marvellous property of either enhancing some other gift or restraining some latent power of mischief. Are you of my mind?—because if, unhappily, you side with *them*, you are at full liberty to cut away as much about Maitland's politics as you like or dislike.

"My hope is that, with the portion now in print by me and that already sent, you will have enough for December and January too. I say this, for I start to-day for a yachting ramble down the coast, and am in for idleness till the hot weather is over. It is 90 something in what represents shade; and what with the smell of oranges and the glow, I feel as if I were sitting in a pot of hot marmalade.

"At all events send me proof; be as critical, but as merciful, as you can."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Hôtel d'Odessa, Spezzia, *Aug.* 3, 1863.

"I send you herewith a short paper on Italian affairs. Call it 'Italian Letters' or 'Glances at Italy,' or anything you like better.

"The adventure with De Langier was my own.

I accepted the mission at the request of Sir G. Hamilton, and very narrowly escaped the cross of Saint Joseph from the Grand Duke.

"I hope you will like the paper, but I reckon implicitly on your frankness. I have got what, if I wasn't so poor, I'd own to be gout in one knuckle, and cannot hold a pen without trembling. I'm off to sea to-night, but send me an early proof."

To Dr Burbidge.[1]

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Aug.* 13, 1863.

"I have been looking for a quiet ten minutes to write to you, but it has not come yet, and so I send this off *in petto.*

"We got up here safely, and met my wife suffering far less than I apprehended, and not materially the worse for all the fatigue.

"It reconciled her, besides, to much that she could reach her own quiet old house here, which has for fifteen years been our home, so that though I proposed remaining a day to rest at Pisa, she would not hear of it, but pushed on bravely to the end.

"It is a wonderful relief to us all to have escaped from the Bagni di Basseti, the coarse food, coarse linen, and coarser language of its vile occupants. Sixteen months of such servitude at the cost of above a thousand pounds have eaten deep into me, and it will require almost

[1] English chaplain at Spezzia.

as many more to blow off the steam of my indignation.

"I have cast my eye over the latter part of 'Tony,' and for the life of me I cannot see what some of the crosses refer to. If I send a proof down will you make the corrections bodily for me?

"Blackwood has written a most kind letter, and incidentally tells me 'Tony' is liked and well spoken of."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"SPEZZIA, *Sept.* 10, 1863.

"It is not very easy to write amidst the anxieties which money occasions—I mean the want of money; but probably I ought to be grateful that my occupation, being one which only employs imagination, necessarily withdraws me, whether I will or no, from the daily thought of difficulties which certainly reflecting over never diminishes.

"I am writing a new story—'Luttrell of Arran'—as sad-coloured as my own reveries; but how is a man to paint a good picture who has nothing but blacks or browns on his palette?

"As to work generally, I have, thank God, health and strength for it. I never was better, nor ever found it easier to apply myself. It is in the precariousness of a life of literature is its real deterrent; but for that defect it is unquestionably the pleasantest possible. At all events it has kept us hitherto, and, I trust, will do so to the end."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Hôtel d'Odessa, Spezzia, *Sept.* 19, 1863.

"By my last short note you will have seen how eagerly I accepted the opportunity of idleness and threw the blame of it on you,—though I say not altogether idle, having to look over again the story I have been writing for Chapman called 'Luttrell,' and which he has been desiring to publish some months back.

"I am glad to get back to my old den, Casa Cap., where I write more at ease and am freer from intrusions than here. Pray let me have No. 2 'Tony' to look over again, and send me No. 3 in the *form* and *quantity* it will appear in the Magazine. Above all, let your people be sure to send me 'Maga.'

"These Italians are making immense warlike preparations. This week the king reviews 360 pieces of artillery,—more than half the number rifled guns. By the end of the month the fleet—now a very respectable squadron—will manœuvre before him. Whatever wars France may engage in these poor devils are sure to partake of. Nice and Savoy are only instalments of the price they are to pay for Solferino."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Oct.* 1, 1863.

"I was called here by telegraph too late to see my only son alive. He died of a ruptured blood-vessel on Wednesday last.

"I have for some years back had many misfortunes; this one fills the cup. I am as bereaved as one can be. My wife is dying, and this shock may be her last. I have no right to obtrude upon you with these, but I think you will pity me. Pity is indeed my portion, for one more broken there cannot be. If I had not begun with you, I would not now, in justice to you, continue. You will serve us both by drawing out what I have written to a fifth number if possible. If not, I will do my utmost to be ready; four parts there are.

"Pray forgive me in all this affliction that I mix you up with what should not touch you.

"My poor boy was twenty-six, — the finest, boldest, and cleverest fellow you ever saw, and one of the handsomest."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Oct.* 12, 1863.

"I can never forget your kind and feeling note.[1]

[1] *From Mr John Blackwood to Mr Charles Lever.*

"*Oct.* 5, 1863.

"I am truly distressed to hear of the sad affliction that has come upon you in the death of your only son. God comfort you, and grant that your poor wife may be supported under this heavy blow. Do not disturb yourself about your tale. I will make arrangements to suit a man suffering under sorrow such as yours. We can either shorten the parts or suspend publication at the end of the fourth part for a month if you are not ready. All the opinions I hear of the first part are highly favourable, and would, under other circumstances, be highly gratifying to you. If I see any comments in the press likely to interest you, I shall send them to you. All your novels bespeak the writer a warm-hearted man, and I think much of you in your affliction. I showed your affecting note to my wife, who, although like myself personally a stranger to you, joins me in warm sympathy."

Broken and crushed as I am, I am not yet insensible to such kindness. If you only knew how we lived with our children, how much we mingled in their lives and they in ours! It was but the other day my poor boy came back from India after seven years' absence, and the feeling that we were all together again had but just dawned on us.

"My poor wife, too,—for two years a great sufferer from an internal inflammation,—was happier than I had seen her for many a day, and when I repined or complained about something, said to me, 'Well, never grumble about such disasters; remember all that we have to be thankful for, and that death has never come amongst us hitherto.' It was but one week after that we lost him.

"From my heart I thank you for your sympathy, all the more, too, that you associated your wife in your sorrow for us.

"*P.S.*—It will be better for me, I believe, that I must work, and work hard; the tired head may help the heavy heart after all."

To Mr Alexander Spencer.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Oct.* 17, 1863.

"Your kindest of notes was very dear to me at this, the saddest day of my life. My poor boy was taken away almost in a moment. Some internal rupture, followed by great hæmorrhage,

overcame him, and he sank at once and never rallied even to consciousness.

"The great struggle of my life was his advancement,—to place him in a high and honourable position; and to maintain him there was an effort for which I toiled and laboured till I had parted with the little my years of industry had gathered, sold my copyrights, and left myself penniless, even to the poverty that I could scarcely collect enough to pay the expenses of the churchyard where I laid him. So much for human foresight! All my love and all my tact to be under the small mound of the churchyard!

"They who speak of religious consolation in great calamity often forget that these consolations only appeal to those whose lives have been invariably directed by a religious standard, and that worldly-minded men like myself can no more obtain the benefit of these remedies than they could of any internal medicament which required a course of long persistence. I say this to show that while not insensible to the truthfulness of these counsels, yet that personally they do not apply.

"It is now left me to labour on with broken spirits and a faded heart. To try and cheat the weariness of others I must strain head and nerves, and stifle true feeling to portray its mockery.

"I suppose I only re-echo what thousands have said, that I wish from my heart the race was run, and that I could lie down beside my poor Charley."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Oct.* 20, 1863.

"It was very neglectful of me not to acknowledge your cheque. It was the more so, since I had not any other money in my possession.

"My wife is a little better. She thanks you deeply and gratefully for your words of kindness and sympathy to us both.

"I have not been able to work yet, but in a day or two I'll try. The poor fisherman in 'The Antiquary' cobbled at the boat of his drowned son the day after,—but it's harder to task the head when the heart is so heavy.

"It is very kind of you to tell me good tidings of my story. Believe me, I am far more anxious for you than for myself."

To Dr Burbidge.

"*Wednesday, Oct.* 21, 1863.

"I only send you so much of my proof as will make the eighth part in publication (*la suite en prochain numero*). I detained it to make certain corrections, by which you will see I am less an ass than a first reading might have persuaded you to believe.

"Blackwood writes to me very favourably; he holds much to the secrecy as to the authorship, and has not even told Aytoun, his most intimate friend.

"With all the *bonne volonté* in the world, I cannot work. I can no more do it than I could

walk with a broken leg. It is not that the thing is difficult, it is impossible.

"I am right well pleased with our success at Church matters—that is, that we have done all that so narrow an atmosphere admits of, and will conquer fresh worlds when they are discovered.

"Are there any English ships in the Gulf? or is there anything consular asked for or wished for?"

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Nov.* 7, 1863.

"'Tony' looks better in Magazine than in proof. I hope your readers like it, and sincerely more on your account than on my own.

"I write now to ask would you like a paper on Turkey, on which Bulwer has been cramming me, but of which *I myself* know nothing? First of all, are you Turk or anti-Turk in Magazine? for B. is outrageously Moslem, and, of course, so will be his article.

"From what I hear from him, the subject might be treated popularly and readably.

"What clever papers those are in this month's Magazine, Hawthorne and the Americans! They are wonderfully well written, and I am amazed at the good temper of the first, for the theme was a very strong temptation for sharp reprisals.

"Up to this I have done nothing. I have a very aguish headache that takes me on alternate days, and for which I am ordered change of air, which,

of course, in my wife's present state of health, is impossible. I am very peevish and dissatisfied at my forced idleness; but I suspect if I were to write in my present mood you would be even less pleased with my industry."

To Dr Burbidge.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Nov.* 11, 1863.

"If the grapes are sour here, it is simply because the fox is too lazy to stand on his hind legs and take them.

"Pendleton goes positively on the 17th—so he says. There is no one, nor can there be any one, here to take his place in permanence. If really, then, you do not actually prefer the hard peas of Spezzia, there is a reasonable chance of success by a little effort. Just in the same ratio that I have always bedevilled my own fortunes, I have a certain luck when I deal with those of others; so if you care to make a move here, say so now, or hold your peace during all next summer.

"I was told yesterday—by so great a swell that he was almost unintelligible, and so high and mighty as not to bear being conquered of by me—that there was a lady now here who was the wife of a gentleman who once was H. M. of Rugby before Arnold, and who, hearing of your vicinity, expressed a lively desire to see you here as chaplain. You would doubtless know who she is, and if she be a valuable constituent. At all events, think of the thing, and *think fast.*

"Sir Bulwer Lytton is graciously pleased to be

pleased with 'Tony,' and condescends to ask Blackwood, Who writes it? Some compensation this, for a friend now here told me he turned it over, but though it wasn't positively *bad*, it was not 'tempting.' Happily it takes all sorts of folk to make a public—as well as a world.

"I believe Julia sent you down a book of mine this morning. If 'The Times' does not reach regularly, it is because it misses here at least every second day.

"Write to me. Tell me that you are well and the Hôtel d'Odessa empty, that the climate agrees with Mrs Burbidge, and that Bassetti has the ague."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *November.*

"Do not cut down T. B.,—it would certainly damage him, and I'll not fail you, so far at least as time is concerned. What you tell me of the opinions of him cheers me much.

"I wrote you a line about Turkey, and now it seems to be that a droll series of short papers might be well devised—Mr Kenny Dodd upon 'Men and Things in General,'—a light [survey] taken from an Irish point of view, and consequently as often *wrong* as right. Next year will be a stirring one here—that is, over the Continent, and afford plenty of passing events when one wanted them.

"I wonder Bulwer Lytton did not guess me, and I wonder even more that he liked T. B.; but I am well pleased all the same.

"So you are coming round to M'Caskey. I half thought you would, and said little in his defence. It certainly is not easy for any one not 'bog-born' to understand that composite animal which Ireland produces, and has so much of the gentleman through a regularly demoralised scampish nature: the *point d'honneur* preserved after honour itself was gone, and the tradition of being respectable maintained after years of a sponging-house and the police-courts. Believe me, I know full fifty M'Caskeys, and one of them became a Chief Justice, though I don't mean mine to end that way.

"My very warmest thanks for yours and Mrs Blackwood's inquiries about my wife. She is a little better,—at least she says so, and that is something,—and she was very grateful about your interest for her."

To Dr Burbidge.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Nov.* 1863.

"I like the notion you suggest of my cancelling. Did you ever see an Irishman throw out a pint of his chalk mixture because he saw a bluebottle in the measure? Or, rather, didn't he daintily pick out the beastie, aye, if it was a cockroach, with finger and thumb, and serve his customer? I tell you I couldn't afford to be careful. I'm not rich enough, to write creditably,—*e poi?* I never could bring myself yet, nor do I hope to arrive at the point hereafter, to respect my Public; and I often hug myself, in the not very profit-

able consolation, that they never thought meaner of me nor do I of them. I *know* that the very worst things I ever did were instant successes, and some one or two—as 'The Dodds,' for instance, which had a certain stamp of originality—were total and lamentable failures. Now, mind, I do not say this in any spirit of misanthropic invective. I do not want, like poor Haydn, to slang the world that refuses to appreciate me—and, for this reason, that they have taken carrion from me and eaten it for good wholesome ox beef; but I say that for such consumers the trouble of selection is clean thrown away, and I feel that if I were to write for Fame, I might finish my book in the Fleet.

"My wife is certainly better; the change is not so great as to alter her habits of rest and seclusion, but she is better, and looks better. Ju and Syd well, and, like all of us, very much yours.

"Your notes are a great pleasure, and I think the postman a scoundrel when he doesn't bring one."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Nov.* 23, 1863.

"The sight of your handwriting is very comforting to me. I tell you frankly I get no letters that cheer me like yours now. I quite agree with you about Turkey, and our policy has no other defence than that it is better to leave open to contingencies what, if we were to deal with summarily, we should finish at once. In not negotiating with Nicholas

England was simply giving way to one of those intermittent attacks of morality which seize her after some aggressive paroxysm — a Caffre war or the annexation of [? Oude]. We have done scores of things—and if we live and prosper will do them again — far more reprehensible than a partition of Turkey. I believe the Crimean war was a signal blunder, and the peace that followed it worse than the war.

"As to Turkey as a question for a paper, I can only say as Lord Plunkett did of a *crim. con.* case: 'I'd like to have a hundred pounds to argue it either way.'

"How glad I am you like 'The Dodds.' I know I have never done, nor ever shall do, anything one half so good, because it is original. I decanted, through all the absurdities of Dodd's nature, whatever I really knew of life and mankind, and it is that very admixture of shrewd sense and intense blundering that makes an Irishman. The perception and the *enjoyment* of the very domestic absurdities that overwhelm him with shame would in any other nature mean insanity, but they only make an Irishman very true to his national characteristics, and rather a pleasant fellow to talk to.

"I'll send you soon a sketch of my intentions as to 'The Dodd' papers; perhaps you are right in keeping the name back.

"Your brother was quite right. My compliments to him, and say he shall not be bored with any more Italian politics. I suppose my old medical

instincts led me into the mess, and made me fancy that an 'occasional bitter' was always useful. I'll send you a batch of MSS. in a day or two, and *when you send me the proofs I'll go ahead vigorously.*

"I am reading Kinglake, and delighted with him. I go with every line of him."

To Dr Burbidge.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Dec.* 1, 1863.

"I have at last bullied my attack, though a severe rheumatism has seized on me and brought me to my knees in more senses than one. I am truly sorry to hear you are out of sorts. Let me prescribe. Go up to the V. Consulate, extremity of the Casa Falconi, and make Freddy (Sanders, F.) search out from among the bottles there one of brandy — it is wonderfully old and good — and take it home, and give yourself a stiffish glass of the same, cold, without water, a short time before bed-hour, and follow it each day by ten grains quinine in two separate doses—five grains each. [*? C'est*] *la grande cure.*

"I am not yet sure whether I have lost MSS. as well as proof, the last, certainly, as you may know to your cost some fine day when you see No. 2 walk in once more to have his face washed, for indeed I could not make the corrections you did, and I know they ought to be made. By the way, neither of us remarked that I gave the same

maid—Honoré—to Sir William Wardle and the Vyners.

"I cannot get to work as I ought. I have a good many anxieties, and I bear them less well than I used. Strange dispensation, that one's load should grow heavier as the back to bear it grows weaker!

"I am making a shocking mull of 'Luttrell,' I feel and know, and can't help it. I suppose I shall go down to Spezzia in a few days—that is, next week, but I don't like leaving home with my wife so nervous and suffering.

"The Church here at a dead-lock. Pendleton threatening, the vestry coaxing, the parson putting forth each Sunday all his most attractive graces, but still, to be sure, asking for more; and the public, most of whom are in the migratory state, declare that they belong to another parish, and are deaf to the charmer."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Florence, *Saturday*, [*Dec.*] 5, [1863.]

"I got a fright at finding that your letter of the 30th does not acknowledge the receipt of 'Tony,' part five, and I hope it has reached you and will soon reach me. I was wrong about seeing Staffa,—that is, I have seen it, but only twice or thrice in as many years,—a mere chance effect of atmosphere which ought not to have been set down as a common occurrence. Bulwer Lytton amused me about the Colonial habits, but what would he say if the Sec. (as in Duke of Newcastle

case) was in the Lords, and never went to the House of Lords at all? His other remark is of more consequence — about Maitland's connection with Neapolitan politics; and I am sorry that he dislikes it, sorry because he is a consummately good critic, and if he with his reflective habits thought my politics a bore, Heaven help me with the genuine novel-reader!

"But, as you truly say (and with more truth in my particular case than in most men's), I must only do the best I can in my *own* way, not meaning that I do not desire to be told when I am wrong, and feel thankful to any one who will take that trouble with me, and endeavour, moreover, so far as I can, to benefit by the counsel. I would not tell him of the author. It will, besides, enable him to be more free in stating his opinion, which the oftener you can obtain for me the better.

"I so fully agreed with you in not reviving Kenny Dodd, that I have created a new man, Cornelius O'Dowd, whose letter to you is enclosed herewith—the third chapter, being 'The Friend of Gioberti,' which caused a laugh from those who have little mirth in their hearts of late. I'm not sure you'll like the thing (though I do), but you will never disconcert me by frankness, backed up, as I now find it to be, by a very kindly feeling towards me. There will very soon be events stirring enough to record here. These people are bent on war, and the secret agent of the Government left this yesterday for Caprera to confer with Garibaldi."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Dec.* 19, 1863.

"There's a common belief here that no letters with a photograph can pass through the Florence post office, as some amateur official is certain to secure it. If this (a copy for a bust that had a year ago some likeness to me) reaches you it will be perhaps lucky, and if it fail there will be no great misfortune to you. The sight of me, either in the flesh or cardboard, has long ceased to make any one more light-hearted. I am shaking away, and if I try to write in my present condition you'd shake too. *Speriamo* — the weather will change soon, and, though I'm not given to be over-sanguine of late, I hope to be again at work in a few days, and send you a new relay of 'Tony.'

"I wish you'd throw your eye over 'Luttrell,' and tell me what you think of it.

"A happy Xmas to you and yours."

To Mr John Blackwood.

"Casa Capponi, Florence, *Dec.* 22, 1863.

"I send you herewith four chapters, to make at least part of No. 6, 'Tony.' Read and comment, and let me soon see the proof, for this is my one busy consular moment and I can do nothing 'fictionally' for some time, though Heaven knows

> 'I know nothing of bottomry, nothing of weight,
> Nothing of cargo, demurrage, or freight;

And such a maze are my faculties wrapt in,
I never could say
To this blessed day
Is it the Consul should pay or the Captain?'

"*Addio*, and a pleasanter and happier Christmas than is the lot of yours faithfully."

To Dr Burbidge.

"Casa Capponi, *Dec.* 26, 1863.

"Will you kindly post the enclosed for me to imply that I am a resident of Spezzia, and still enjoy the graceful hospitalities of the Hôtel d'Odessa?

"I am glad you take the view which, though I did not word before, I myself entertained of the 'Athenæum' criticism. I believe I can guess the secret spring which set the attack in motion, and the whole is not worth thinking of, and I can dismiss it from my thoughts without even an effort.

"Still, I do not believe 'Luttrell' will do, and my conviction is that the despair that attaches to Ireland, from Parliament down to 'Punch,' acts injuriously on all who would try to invest her scenes with interest or endow her people with other qualities than are mentioned in police courts.

"Tell me, and the theme is a pleasanter one, do you take or give yourself a holiday at this season? You surely do not treat the old age and last moments of the year so disparagingly as to make working days of them! Well, then, come up and give us three or four of them here. I make

no excuse for a dull house, probably you wouldn't come if it were a gay one, but such as it is you will be a very welcome guest, and I am sure that a little new venue and new witnesses in the box would be of service to you."

To Mr John Blackwood.

[Undated.]

"My present plan is of such a book as would make an ordinary 3-vol. novel, for which I have, I believe, sufficient material for a good story, and a stirring one. I have not, however, written one line beyond what I have sent you, so that to trust me you must take my own security.

"Serial-writing not alone adapts itself to my habits, but actually chimes in with a certain mixture of indecision and facility which marks whatever I do in this way—that the success or failure of any character before the world has always guided me, whether to work out the creation more fully and perfectly, or to abandon it quietly. To give an instance,—I could give over fifty,—Micky Free was never intended to figure in more than a passing scene in 'Charles O'Malley'; but the public took to him, and so I gave him to them freely.

"All these 'Confessions of Harry Lorrequer' will neither exhibit my artistic or constructive power in a very high light. *N'importe!* if you take me, you must take me as they do the two-year-olds—with all my engagements, which are to write in the only way I have hitherto done, or I honestly believe I could do at all.

"As to money, a post bill, or your cheque, quite as negotiable, will suit me perfectly. I hope I am legible, but I have my fears, for I jammed my fingers in a block on board my boat t'other day, and have not used a pen since till now."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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Downey, Edmund
Charles Lever, his life in his letters

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